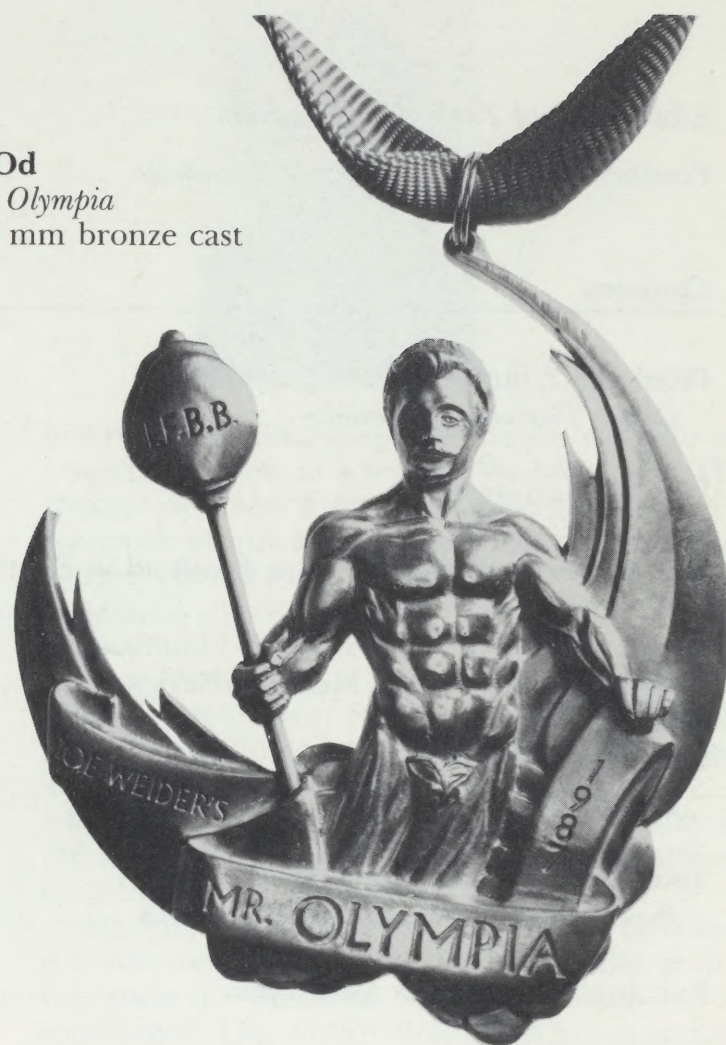


FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK
By David Thompson Alexander

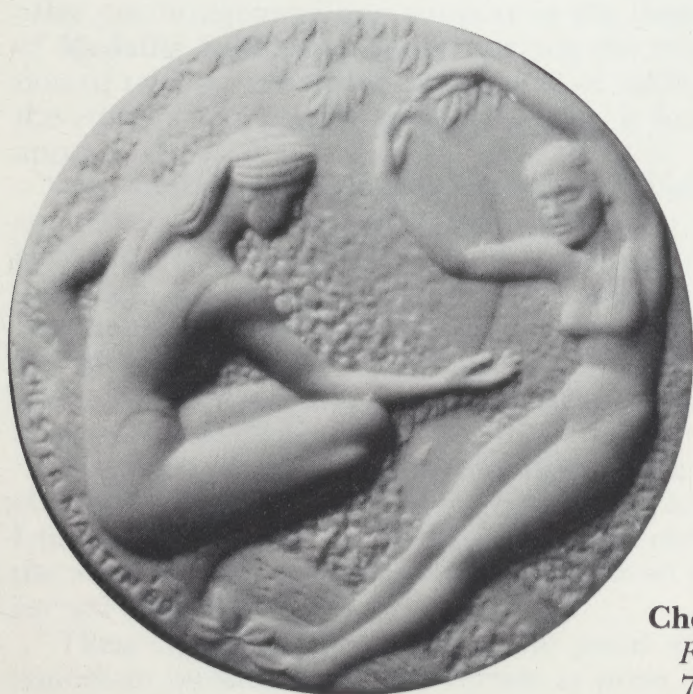
Kira Od
Mr. Olympia
120 mm bronze cast



Autumn 1990

MEDALLIC SCULPTURE

Official Publication of the American Medallic Sculpture Association



Chester Y. Martin 1934
Figures in Landscapes
76 mm porcelain

Editor: *David Thomason Alexander*

Production Editor: *Patricia A. Alexander*

| Contents | Page |
|---|-------------------|
| From the Editor's Desk <i>David Thomason Alexander</i> | 1 |
| We Get Letters | 2 |
| Medallic Sculpture Establishes Foothold in South West <i>Don Schol</i> | 3 |
| AMSA Unveils Second Medal in Series | 7 |
| What Do Art Medals Say? <i>Joseph Veach Noble</i> | 8 |
| You Can Commission a Medal <i>Beverly Mazze, Past President, AMSA</i> | 12 |
| Exciting New Artists' Association | 14 |
| AMSA BIO—Don Dow | 14 |
| A Method to Make Coin and Medal Basins <i>Don Dow</i> | 16 |
| FIDEM 1990 <i>By Alan Stahl</i> | 20 |
| From Our Members | Inside Back Cover |

Covers: Selected American Medals in 1990 FIDEM

AMSA expresses its gratitude to immediate past editor Susan Murar for her help in assembling materials for this issue of Medallic Sculpture.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By David Thomason Alexander

At the AMSA Board meeting of January 26, I agreed to serve as editor of **Medallic Sculpture**. Having accepted this assignment, I believe it might be useful to tell our readers something about the new editor.

I am a native New Yorker, although I have lived most of my life away from the city, including 30 years in Miami, Florida. I am not an artist. By training and experience I am a combination numismatist, historian, curator, writer and editor.

After receiving my Master of Arts degree from the University of Miami in 1962, I served 11 years as director of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida in Miami. I then spent seven very busy years on the staff of **Coin World** in Sidney, Ohio as staff writer and ultimately as executive editor of the old **Numismatic Scrapbook** magazine and international editor of **Coin World**.

Since 1981 I served as cataloger and researcher for major medal and coin auction houses in Danbury, Des Moines and Miami. In June 1990 I joined Stack's as a cataloger, covering a wide area of U.S and world coins, medals and paper money.

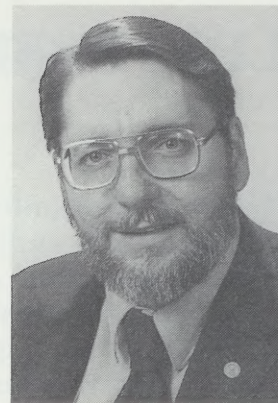
The medal has been a source of fascination to me since I first viewed the display of Society of Medalists issues at the American Numismatic Society museum in 1956. Today I am an avid collector of both art and historical medals of the U.S. and the larger world. For the record, my involvement with the medal has been as a student of the medal, not as a creator of medallic art.

Perhaps this is an advantage. I am not in any kind of competition with the artists who bring us the best of their creative energies, but I can offer encouragement and support in the pages of **Medallic Sculpture**. Since fostering the creation of true art medals is a basic goal of AMSA, the editor's role may be more vital than it first appears.

I was one of the earliest members of AMSA, attending the first organizational meetings in Domenico Facci's studio almost 10 years ago, and was a member of the first AMSA Board. Despite the chaos of a trans-continental move to Des Moines, I was able to complete the introductory article for the first AMSA medallic exhibition catalog in 1983.

The organization has been very dear to me ever since, in spite of the intervening miles, and I have followed with more than casual interest the association's remarkable growth and level of success thus far.

These are interesting times in the world of American medals. It seemed certain at press time that the major producer of great art medals



has been sold and its effects are en route to an uncertain future in a remote Western state. The firm as we knew it is gone, and whether its successor or any other commercial producer will work as closely with the artistic community is not certain.

It would be remarkable if AMSA were to emerge as the only entity actively striving to provide opportunity for the medalist. Then too, what becomes of the legendary Society of Medalists has yet to be learned with any precision. After 60 years of fostering the highest quality in the art of the medal, it would be unthinkable to lose this storied society.

For me, the honor of serving AMSA as editor is a very real one. All are aware that this is the first issue of "**Medallic Sculpture**" to appear in some time. The AMSA Board has taken action to correct this problem. The issue will be followed by a second one to be published after July 1991.

For this publication program to succeed, of course, the editor must have YOUR support! I know that virtually all of you have something to say about the philosophy of the medal, about the intensive effort for its design and the many challenges of its physical creation. Share those ideas with us, and you will find yourself clarifying your own thinking even as you explain your thoughts and experiences to fellow practitioners of the art of the medal.

I am here to help you. I have spent the last 16 years preparing manuscripts of every possible level of quality for publication, and will be delighted to aid you if you feel your contribution might do well with a bit of editorial polish. Don't be bashful, we don't grade your papers!

You may send material for **Medallic Sculpture** to me at Post Office Box 780, Mahopac NY 10541. My home phone is (914) 628-7535, although I request that calls in the evening be placed before 10 pm, as my wife Pat is a working computer programmer and my four year-old daughter is a light sleeper.

Whether you are an working medallic sculptor, a writer, curator, collector, dealer, or simply a connoisseur of the medal, let us hear from you sooner rather than later. This is a two-way street. We need you and you need us. Let's work together to strengthen AMSA through **Medallic Sculpture**!

WE GET LETTERS!

Dear Editor:

The AMSA network works!

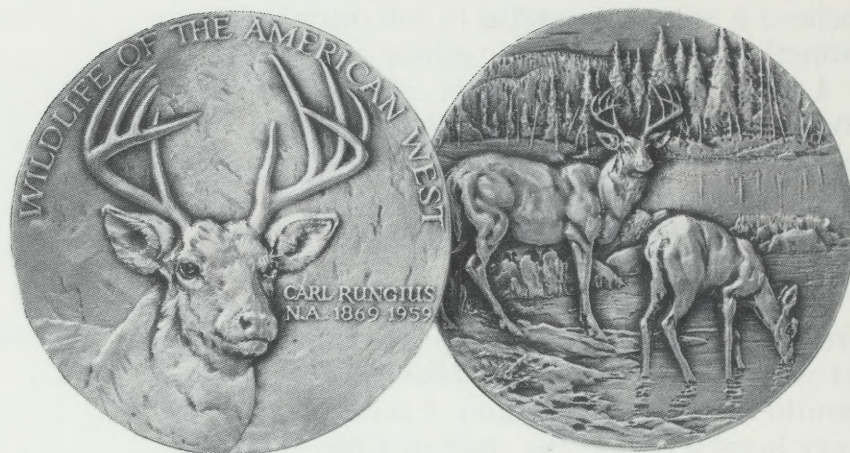
It all starts with David T. Alexander, then only an AMSA member, recommending Robert A. Weinman for the job of doing the models for four medals of American big game animals to be depicted in the manner of the late (painter) Carl Rungius. Weinman, busy and bothered by the little amount of time entailed to prepare the models, suggested Eugene Daub as the person to do the job.

Daub did—and handsomely, too—as is shown in the full-page color ad placed by WILDLIFE MEDALLIONS in the March 1990 issue of **SPORTS AFIELD**. The series also received editorial notice in an illustrated box in its Almanac section.

The current agenda in the Weinman studio is weighted to things in the round, giving me relief from relief. I am trying to clean up a many-decade backlog of personal sculptures which in the past have had to yield to commercial jobs to keep the mortgage alive and diminishing.

I wish you well. We are both, in a sense, founding fathers of AMSA. I enjoyed talking with you about the new organization and its future back in 1982. I am amazed and delighted that it not only continues but waxes strong; must be a need was there which it fills. Welcome aboard, and good luck.

Robert A. Weinman



Dear Editor:

It is so good to hear that AMSA has a new editor. The position should fit in well with your background. I'll try to gather some material to send to you. I've spent about 25 years working with U.S. Navy ships and Naval installations, bronze tablets, coats-of-arms, and portraits.

In 1930 I opened a small part-time free-lance studio that later became my sole work place in 1961, purchased an automatic die reducing machine. This made it possible to offer my work at many different sizes. My Navy ship and installation work has been my mainstay since 1961.

Due to my age 83, I find my work hours have to be reduced. My wife is a former Art teacher and I have a grown family of 3 boys and 2 girls. Our oldest son is in the sign and advertising field quite close to Newport, R.I. My oldest daughter is a Special Education teacher and has a flair for innovative ideas in the gift line. We all live close to the jewelry centers of the U.S. such as Providence, RI and Attleboro, MA.

My earlier days after RISD (5 1/2 years) I decided oil painting of portraits would be a line to follow but the Great Depression put an end to this trend of thought. Turning to photo engraving I was able to make salable plates. My course again changed to sculpture for bronze in its many shapes and uses.

I don't believe I will ever be into the depths of work of my earlier years. Now I hope to keep the die reducing machine busy, adding whatever I like doing best. This will include work in clay, wax and plaster, some water color and oil painting. I hope to send along some photocopies of articles but not with this mailing.

Tom Goff

MEDALLIC SCULPTURE ESTABLISHES A FOOT-HOLD IN THE SOUTHWEST

By Don Schol

A number of years ago a friend, who was an avid coin collector among other things, gave me what he described as a very valuable coin to settle a financial debt. I later realized that the piece was not a coin at all but a 17th century Chinese wedding medal. It was a curious object, round, about 70 mm in diameter, made of bronze, with a square hole in the center surrounded by figurative elements and Chinese writing. I accepted his explanation of its value and put it away in a safe place to be forgotten for years.

A decade later, I received a mailing from an organization called the American Medalllic Sculpture Association. It was an announcement which pictured several medallions, one of which reminded me of my long-lost Chinese wedding medallion. On a lark, I rummaged through my old treasures and found the medallion and gave it a special place on my desk. Thus I became awakened to the possibilities of medallic art and joined AMSA.

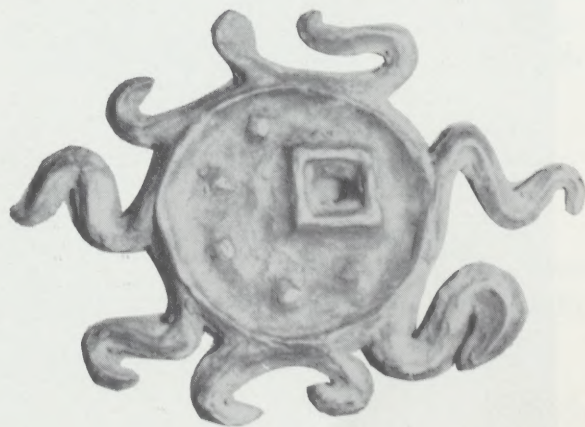
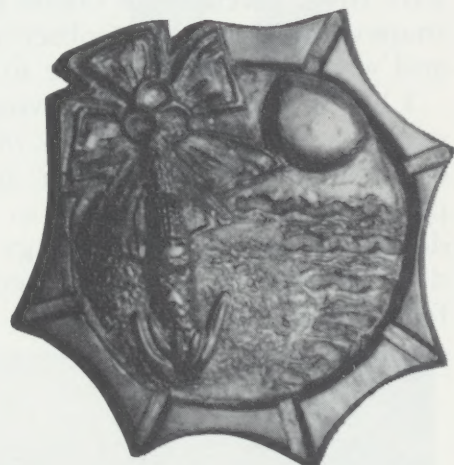
I think the fact I had been carving large circular relief panels in wood for a number of years left me sensitive to the basics of the traditional medallion. Since I have been a sculptor and member of the art faculty at the University of North Texas since 1969, I have made it a practice to keep my teaching program stimulated with the introduction of new and different kinds of project assignments for my students.

In the fall of 1988, I attended my first AMSA conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There, not only did I get to meet some of the people whose work I had seen in various publications, but better yet, I had an opportunity to see close at hand their medallic creations.

Armed with a new enthusiasm I returned home with the conviction that a project involving the creation of a medallion was just what my students needed for something new and different in their sculptural experience. Since I had been involved with designing and casting bronze medallions on my own by then, the process was familiar to me and seemed appropriate for the classroom.

What really convinced me of the value of such a project was the fact I could now teach several sculptural processes within the context of one major effort, that of making the medallion! Now clay modeling, negative and positive plaster mold making, flexible mold making, ceramic shell mold making, and bronze casting could all be taught as a part of one unified project.

Until this time all of the above mentioned processes were taught as a part of separate



projects and required some editing within a semester, leaving some of the methods slighted or neglected altogether in favor of the more popular ones.

In the spring semester of 1989, I introduced the bronze medallion project to my Sculpture I class on a trial basis and to my advance undergraduate and graduate classes as a workshop. I started by showing slides of medals along with the circulation of a few of my own medallions while I discussed some basic history of the medal. I proposed that the class would be assigned the task of designing and creating a medallion that reflected their own stylistic imagery.

During the course of the project the students would have an opportunity actually to learn all the processes mentioned above, which many of them had previously known only through lecture or discussion. The response from all the students was overwhelming. They immediately became involved, many of them designing several medallions.

Although my introduction to them stressed the traditional round format of the medal, I gave them freedom to create new and unusual shapes, asking them to observe an overall size and weight limit acceptable to AMSA.

I began the project by giving each of the students a one pound block of sculptor's hard oil-based styling clay and an suitably shaped plywood basin upon which to model their design. Observing such things as undercuts and draft angles, everyone proceeded to make their first negative plaster mold.



The following is the roster of art students participating in Don Schol's innovative class:

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Patricia Booten | Carla King | Jane Pullman |
| Karen D'Silva | Steven Leary | Deborah Ramirez |
| Clayton Driver | Leslie Lee | Jonelle Smith |
| John Durham | Robert Little | Scott Stevens |
| Jason Harskjold | Brandon Lokey | Shawn Strait |
| Christian Hinds | Heather Miller | Katherine Villyard |
| Wendy Hyden | Deanna Presnal | Joanie Walker |



Once easily removed from the oil based clay, the negative molds were prepared for the positive plaster pour. After separation, the positive plaster mold was cleaned and refined and prepared for the flexible mold.

Although there are many fine and expensive flexible mold materials on the market, I have found that careful application of 100 percent white silicone caulking material makes a fine and inexpensive flexible mold. Every student used this product successfully.

Now removed from the plaster positive, the flexible mold was ready for the pouring of the hot petroleum wax. Once cooled, the wax positives of everyone's final medallions were removed from the flexible molds and trimmed and/or touched up as needed. For the rest of the process, the students followed the traditional gating and venting necessary for the ceramic shell, mold casting method that we have established at UNT for bronze casting.

Everyone's medallions cast without failure, causing enthusiasm to run high. The final finished results were quite impressive and all of the students were convinced that the medallion was here to stay.

Spring semester 1990, I again sponsored the medallion project to a new group of students and found that the medallion's own reputation had preceded it. Not only were the new students ready and willing to participate, but many students from the previous medallion classes were back to participate once again on their own time, outside their normal academic schedules.

Needless to say, I was very pleased that medallion sculpture was so well received among my students and colleagues, besides demonstrating that it was an instructive and viable art form. Be it a very old and traditional art form, the medallion lends itself to contemporary imagery and finds itself very much at home among the students of the largest art department in the southwest at the University of North Texas, Denton.



POSTSCRIPT BY THE AUTHOR:

Dear Editor:

In answer to questions asked in reference to my article above: "Plasticine" is a common name used to describe the oil-based, hard, styling clay that I mentioned in the article. There are a number of basic formulas used in the make-up of these styling clays, as they are called in the foundry business. The one that we use is distributed by Freeman Manufacturing and Supply, a foundry supplier, located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214. This firm can be reached at (414) 771-5760 or 1-800-558-0866.

An "appropriately shaped plywood basin" would be one that mimics the shape of the would-be medallion but is an inch larger all

around. If the medallion is to be round, then the basin would be round; if the medallion is to be square, then the basin would be square, etc.

Positive plaster molds were made in order to impress upon everyone the need to observe the problems sometimes encountered with undercuts. Also by making a positive plaster, everyone was given an opportunity to "clean up" any details and then possibly make some undercuts if desired.

This positive plaster mold also gives everyone a solid base to which they can return should the flexible mold not be well made and require a "remake." Sometimes flexible molds taken directly from the clay can suffer the loss of both

in the inexperienced hands, thus requiring the artist to repair or even remake the clay positive.

Besides, as I teach this process, I want my students to experience all phases of the mold-making process. If I were in a hurry, I would have the students make the medallion directly in the wax and sprue up for the bronze without any of the intermediate steps. Flexible molds could be made later from the successful bronzes should an edition be called for. For the sake of convenience, we usually use #1 molding plaster which is suitably hard for all molds, negative as well as positive.

The silicone that we use for flexible molds is that commonly obtained in the tube and used for caulking around windows and the like. It is 100% pure silicone and is relatively inexpensive. It is applied carefully in thin layers allowing about twenty minutes drying time before the next layer is applied. Caution must be taken to avoid bubbles.

There are much more effective silicone mold-making formulas on the market as we know but they are much more expensive as well. For the careful student the tube silicone works well and is economical.

We heat our wax in an electric roasting pan with a thermostat to about 175 to 200 degrees F. We pour the wax directly into the flexible mold without ceremony, allowing it to cool in the refrigerator and easily extract it by flexing the mold. We have found many times that vibration can induce unwanted bubbles. Quickly pouring the wax at 175 degrees works for us. Warping never seems to be a problem because we make

our flex moulds thick enough (3/8 to 1/2 inches thick) with very flat top surfaces which make flat bottoms when pouring.

We touch up the wax surfaces with very small plaster spatulas. We use no chemicals. Rough surfaces are glazed over with a burning candle or match briefly held under the inverted wax model. We also sometimes use very fine wood-burning irons or small electric soldering irons to carefully heat or glaze over imperfections in the wax.

Sometimes we do patina the medals. However, before that we thoroughly buff clean the bronze with a fine-grit greaseless buffing compound that comes like sausage in a roll and must be kept refrigerated for storage. We use a variety of chemicals for the various colors of patina.

To list those chemicals and formulas here would be endless. That is the subject of another article. As a matter of fact, I currently have a graduate student working on new patina formulas for our use. He has a background in organic chemistry and is also a sculptor.

I cannot tell you student names without again seeing the contact sheets. Most all of the medallions ranged in size between 60 and 110 mm. My award medallion is 125 mm in diameter. There is a doctoral program in college teaching in art with a strong studio emphasis at the University of North Texas now no longer called North Texas State University. I hope I have adequately answered your questions.

Don Schol

AMSA Membership Application

- ☐ Enclosed is my check for \$25 annual AMSA dues in the U.S. and Canada
- ☐ Enclosed is my check for \$35 annual AMSA dues outside the U.S. and Canada
- ☐ Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to further help AMSA reach its goals.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: daytime (____) _____ home (____) _____

- ☐ Please check if we may list your address in a membership directory
- ☐ Please check if we may list your phone number in a membership directory



I am an ____ Artist, ____ Sculptor, ____ Dealer,
____ Collector, ____ Producer or Supplier,
____ Other _____

Please send completed application
and payment in U.S. dollars to:

George S. Cuhaj, Treasurer
P.O. Box 6021
Long Island City, NY 11106

AMSA UNVEILS SECOND MEDAL IN SERIES

AMSA unveiled the second art medal in its limited-edition series at the 22nd Congress of the Federation Internationale de la Medaille (FIDEM), held in Helsinki, Finland at the end of June, 1990. Titled "Bursting Forward," the lost wax cast bronze by Canadian Sculptor Rudi Genest is the second AMSA medal to celebrate the invincibility of the human spirit.

"The inspiration for my medal came from the incredible events taking place in the Eastern-bloc countries, beginning with the Prague and Leipzig protests and following through to the tearing down of the Berlin wall," Genest recounts. "Night after night, as I watched the story unfold in televised images, I let my fingers work the wax master into a commentary on these historic events."

At the extreme right-hand edge of the obverse or face of the bronze, the nude figure of a man struggles to break away from the confines of the medal. "But it's the reverse that defines the depth of that struggle," AMSA immediate past president Beverly Mazze commented to FIDEM delegates attending her workshop session in Helsinki.

"The background surface of the medal behind the straining figure is bent forward—a distortion explained on the reverse by the strength with which the man clings to even as he attempts to free himself."

The "Crazy Horse" medal by California sculptor Eugene Daub, the first art medal in the AMSA series, also was shown during Mrs. Mazze's presentation, which focussed on emerging markets for art medals. One market is the collector of works of art, for whom the medal is a very affordable piece of small sculpture.

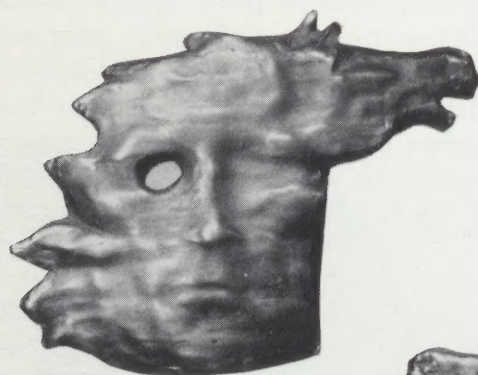


Another is the collector of coins who is getting priced out of the market by the entry of large investment houses. Especially for these new markets, each of the AMSA medals is gift-boxed with a small stand so that the medal can be displayed as a piece of sculpture. Without the stand, the medal can be used as a desk accessory, or it can be housed in a traditional collector's cabinet.

According to AMSA Medals Program Chairman George Cuhaj, each of the Genest medals is individually lost-wax cast in bronze by a Montreal foundry. The medals are signed with the sculptor's full name on the obverse; each is serially numbered on the reverse, which also contains the title "Bursting Forward." The medals are hand-finished and patinated by the artist.

"Bursting Forward," like all the medals in the AMSA series, will be available for a period of only two years. After that time, the molds will be broken and no further copies will be cast. Cost per medal is \$65.00 for AMSA members and \$90.00 for non-members, plus \$6.00 for shipping and handling.

To reserve your copy, send a check in U.S. currency or an international Money Order drawn on a U.S. Bank to AMSA, George Cuhaj, P. O. Box 6021, Long Island City, NY 11106.



WHAT DO ART MEDALS SAY?

By Joseph Veach Noble

*Executive Director, The Society of Medalists;
Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Brookgreen
Gardens of American Sculpture.*

In the beginning, during the Renaissance, medals presented the portraits of important personages, rulers and prelates. Long before the advent of photography and television, the medal was a most useful method to transmit the visage of the important to their peers and to the plebeians.

Thus the function of the medal was to preserve and enhance the image and reputation of a specific person. With the portrait on the obverse, the reverse side of the medal usually was embellished with an allegorical scene or device which alluded to the virtues of the subject of the medal.

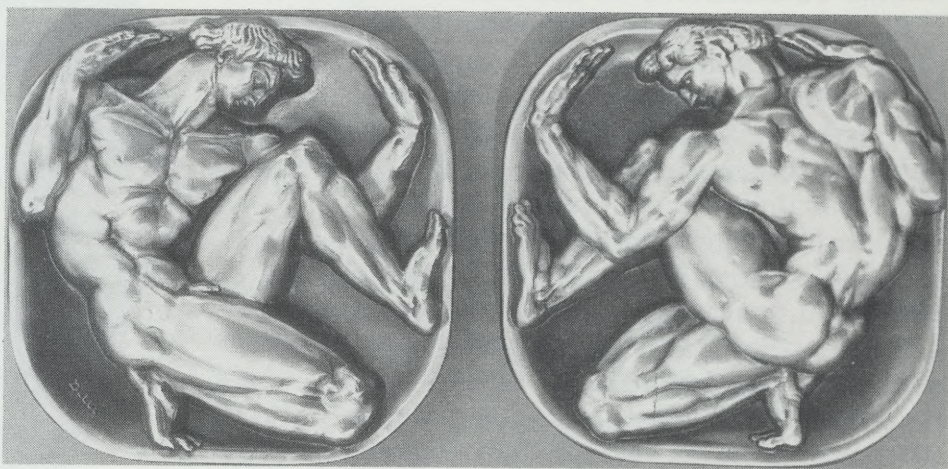
As medals developed, the fact that they could be issued in virtually unlimited editions, and thus reach a very large audience, encouraged their use for commemorative or propaganda purposes. In modern parlance they were a multiple. Rival kingdoms issued medals bearing scenes of military triumphs complete with appropriate figures of valor and victory crowning the conquering heroes.

Eventually the world of commerce discovered the medal and manufacturers saw in it a device to promote their products. A medal may be lost, but nobody ever throws one away. Accordingly, medals given to the members of the general public at a World's Fair, presented to a business associate or bestowed on a faithful employee, are treasured for a lifetime.

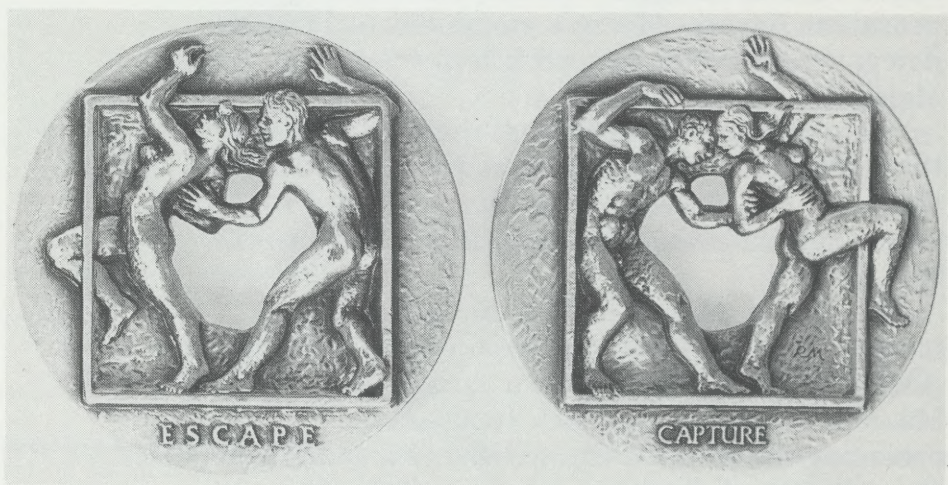
In an age when the message from the television tube is extinguished with the flip of a switch, or an advertisement in a newspaper is tossed aside the following morning, the long staying power of the medal is still most impressive.

In all of these types of medals, there are those which rise above their subject matter, and are independent works of art. The skill of the sculptor sometimes transcended the mundane subject he had been assigned. Thus the art medal has existed, albeit often heavily outweighed with its assigned utilitarian task.

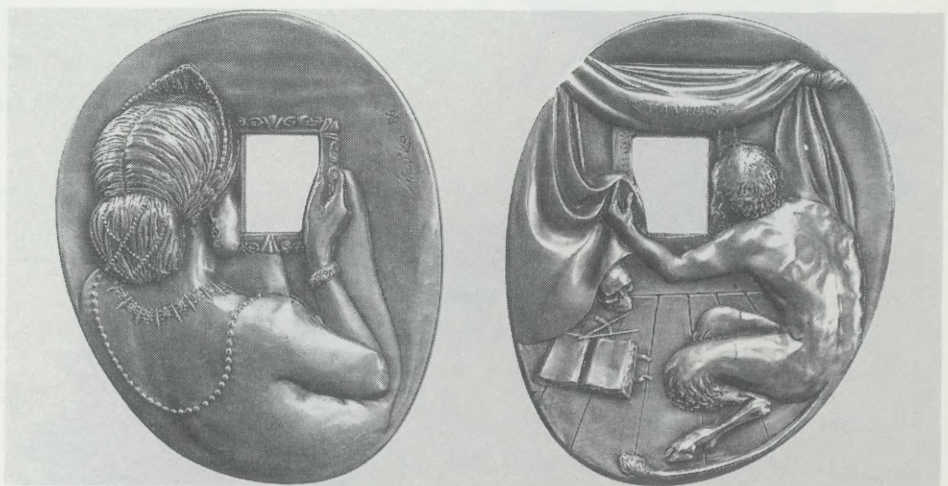
A more recent development is the medal created for its own sake. It stands alone as an art object beholden neither to commerce or commemoration. It is complete in itself. Devoid of governmental or business sponsorship, it exists with but a fragile financial undergirding. The art medal is the tender creation of the dedicated medalist sculptor and a few enlightened Mints, both public and private.



Donald DeLue: *Bursting the Bounds*, The Society of Medalists, 1985, 73 mm.



Richard McDermott Miller: *Escape and Capture*, The Society of Medalists, 1985, 73 mm.



Marika Somogyi: *Vanitas*, The Society of Medalists, 1986, 73 mm.

What makes a medal an art medal? Its purity of purpose sets it apart from its commissioned brethren. Next, the skill of the artist determines whether the medal is undistinguished or actually a work of fine art. Finally, the art medal has something to say: an idea, mood or thought-provoking concept which is transmitted to the viewer holding the medal in his hand.

A conventional piece of sculpture may be a work of art, a thing of beauty and a joy forever, but still lacking in life. It is what a piece of sculpture says that lifts it to the ultimate heights of creativity. When one thinks of the sculpture of Michelangelo, one does not dwell on his surface texture, his proportions or compositions, but rather on the blazing eyes of his Moses, and the tender sorrow of the Virgin Mary holding the body of her son in the Pieta. These works of sculpture say something...they communicate.

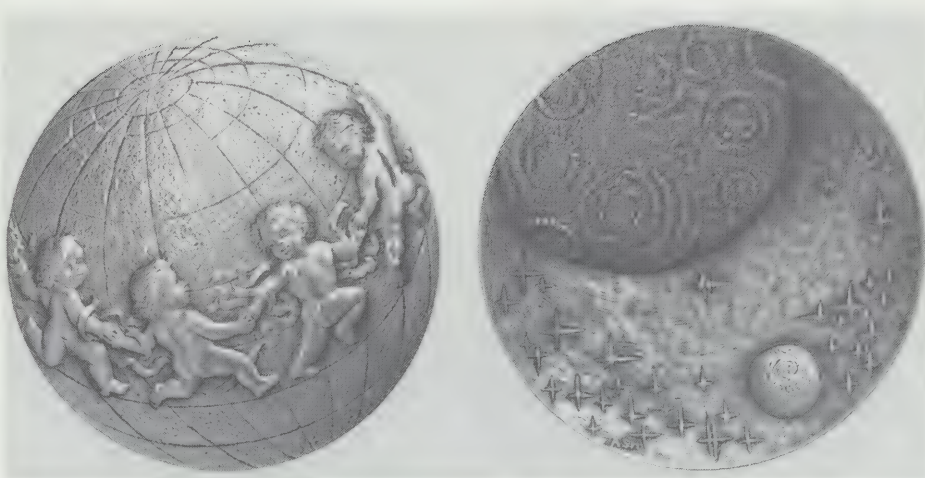
So it is with the medal, it can speak as well. We are used to thinking of the two dimensions inherent in drawings and paintings, namely height and width. In sculpture we are dealing in three dimensions with the addition of depth. But in medals the fourth dimension is also present—it is time. Time has been added because both sides of the medal cannot be viewed at the same time. They must be seen sequentially as the medal is turned back and forth in the hand. Accordingly, the medalist has the opportunity to employ time in his composition.

The two sides of a medal are joined physically, but it is only through the skill of the sculptor that they will relate to each other in a meaningful manner. There are various organizational methods that may be employed to accomplish this.

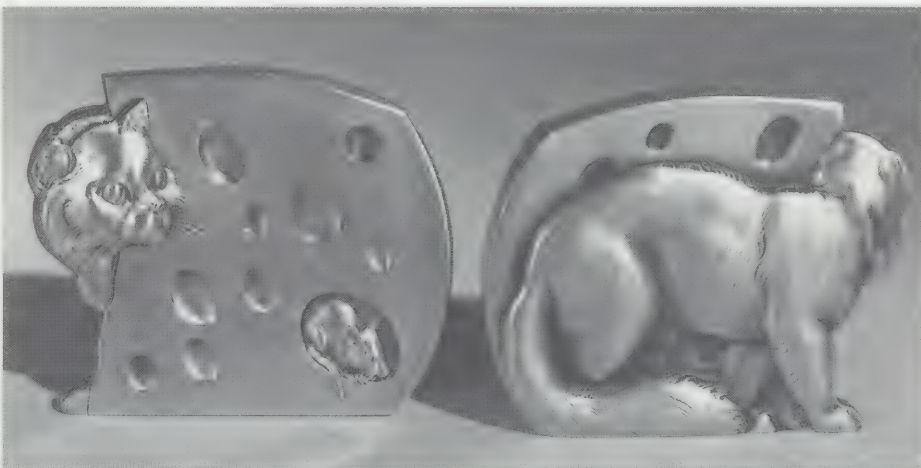
Now let us examine some contemporary medals. In the choice of subject matter the medalist may decide to have both sides consistent and reinforce the other. A medal by Karen Worth from Brookgreen Gardens does just that. The obverse portrays the classical subject of Pygmalion and Galatea, the sculptor and his model; the reverse continues the classic theme of Orpheus with the animals and birds. With this constant device she has woven together the subject of sculpture and the world of nature in a unified treatment.

Granville Carter created a historical medal for the same organization. The obverse shows an equestrian image of General Francis Marion, the great Revolutionary War hero of South Carolina. He chose for the reverse a fox devouring a serpent because the British had nicknamed Marion the "swamp fox," for his uncanny ability to disappear into the trackless watery wilderness of the area. The reverse thus reinforces the obverse.

The sculptor may decide to use the two sides of the medal in a contrasting manner. The mythological world and the real world was the



Alex Shagin: *One Planet*, The Society of Medalists, 1986, 73 mm.



Robert Weinman: *Cat and Mouse*, The Society of Medalists, 1986, 73 mm.



Laci de Gerenday: *The Mythological and the Real World*, Brookgreen Gardens, 1987, 75 mm.

double theme employed by Laci de Gerenday. The obverse portrayed an elegant satyr, and the reverse depicted the primeval coastal marshland of a section of Brookgreen Gardens. The two widely differing subjects were more effective because of their juxtaposition.

Animals and plants are two parts of the world of nature, and Chester Martin used one side of the medal for the fauna and the other for the flora. The two contrasting subjects were fused by the artistry of the sculptor.

The world of nature is not always beautiful or placid. One of its laws is "eat or be eaten." Michael Lantz presented this fact forcefully on one side of a medal and on the reverse he let his imagination playfully soar with Pegasus and a winged colt. This bold contrast is especially effective.

The sculptor may use one side of the medal to modify or even to contradict the other. A very beautiful nude woman admiring herself in the mirror was created by Marika Somogyi. It seems a straightforward visual statement, but the reverse changes the meaning as it shows the devil peering back through the same mirror, because she is guilty of the sin of vanity. This medal for the Society of Medalists demonstrates the freedom an art medal can achieve.

Over the years medalists have relied heavily on inscriptions and mottos to aid in the interpretation of their medals. Lettering can be highly decorative, but to be successful it must be essential and integral to the composition.

Robert A. Weinman used a pattern of lettering behind his head of Socrates, and on the reverse the inscription runs along two edges of his medal. That highly acclaimed square medal and the more recent medal described below are part of The Society of Medalists series.

Paul Manship employed a circular pattern for his lettering ringing his head of Dionysus on the Society of Medalists second issue of 1930. Interestingly, he chose not to use lettering on the reverse where two young satyrs tread grapes in a huge bowl. Obviously, he felt that lettering on that side would be superfluous.

Many creators of art medals find it most satisfying to omit lettering and have their sculpture tell the entire story. An inscription that is redundant is far worse than no inscription at all.

The physical appearance of a medal is a strong part of the design. One factor is the height of the relief used by the sculptor. The following four examples created for Brookgreen Gardens demonstrate this reality.

A medal of very low relief was done by John Cook, exhibiting great delicacy and subtle modeling. He achieved this refined effect by carving the figures in intaglio in plaster rather than sculpting them in clay in the conventional manner. The reverse is an amusing play of positive and negative forms of the centaur.

Gertrude Lathrop also used low relief to great advantage. The reclining stag is a masterful and perceptive study of the animal at rest. For this type of rendering, low relief is most appropriate. The other side depicting the tragically extinct South Carolina paroquet is a sensitive study which catches the spirit of this now-vanished creature.

Higher relief makes a stronger statement and lends itself to bold composition. Donald DeLue was a master of the genre. For the obverse he created Apollo, the god of the sun, being carved in stone by a sculptor. On the reverse he depicted Diana, the goddess of the night, being modeled in clay. The very high relief increases the drama and the impact.

Marcel Jovine has extended the range of his high relief by matching deep areas on one side of a medal to areas in high relief on the other. In this way he has modeled the deep area behind the head of Pegasus to correspond to the protruding shoulder of the sculptor on the other side of the medal. This is a very creative utilization of the medallic process.

The patina of a medal does not have to be the same on both sides. Alex Shagin created "One Planet" for the Society of Medalists and on the obverse the globe with the dancing children is a bright golden hue, while on the reverse the earth is seen from beyond the moon with the sky the darkness of outer space. Incidentally, the medal is strongly curved with the globe side convex and the space side concave.

Almost all medals are round, and yet there is no valid reason for this. Perhaps it is a carryover from coinage. Fortunately, many art medals today have broken away from this restrictive convention. All shapes are possible, and free forms may echo the shape of the subject matter.

A powerful example is "Cat and Mouse," created by Robert A. Weinman for the Society of Medalists, a whimsical medal presenting a cat peering at a mouse in a hole in a large wedge of Swiss cheese. The scene continues on the reverse side and the medal is shaped so that it becomes a small, freestanding piece of sculpture.

In another high relief medal, Donald DeLue created "Bursting the Bounds" for the Society of Medalists. And it does just that—combining the obverse and the reverse into a single subject seen on both sides as in the same instant. In this medal, time stands still.

On the other hand, time appears to move in Richard Miller's "Escape and Capture." Based on the eternal theme of man and woman, the "escape" takes place on the obverse, the "capture" on the reverse just a few seconds later. Bold perforations in the medal allow the two sides to flow into each other and this heightens their interrelationship. Skillfully, the sculptor has used time to intensify the dialogue between medalist and viewer.

Going a step further, there is the multiple medal which has been pioneered by Kauko Rasanen of Finland. Such a medal consists of several pieces of metal which are struck or cast so that they fit precisely together into a single entity. In this manner two or more medal sections, each with an obverse and a reverse, nest together to create a multiple medal allowing increased interplay of the images.

The medal he made of King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden is both perforated and multiple. It opens to reveal the king in his youth, and the reverse shows him as a renowned archaeologist about to excavate in "mother earth."

Rasanen's medal of Leonardo Da Vinci is even more complicated with three separate sections fitting together. The six surfaces present various aspects of Da Vinci's complex life and interests. As the viewer manipulates these many elements, the tactile experience compliments the visual stimulation dramatically. The power of the medal has thus been vastly extended.

Very few existing art forms involve the actual handling of the artwork. This is an added element in the experiencing of a medal.

The beauty of the art medal is that it is relatively unfettered by the constraints of commerce. The individualistic sculptor may himself cast a small edition of say a half dozen medals with comparative ease using simple and inexpensive equipment. The private mints and issuers such as the Society of Medalists strike limited editions for their members.

Founded in 1930, this society is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to encouraging and fostering the art of the medal. It actively encourages sculptors to experiment with techniques and subject matter not appropriate for commercial medals.

The cast medal has the advantage of rapid production from the wax model to the finished bronze, and it offers the possibility of undercuts if desired. For small editions, it is quite economical. On the other hand, the struck medal requires the creation of expensive steel dies and the use of a tremendous press capable of a force of a hundred tons.

Striking yields a smooth and lustrous surface to the medal. Despite its complexity, this process is the most economical for large editions. All of the Brookgreen Gardens and the Society of Medalists issues were struck using this process by Medallic Art Company of Danbury, Connecticut.

Today's sculptor has inherited an ancient art form, but with the freedom granted by the new technical processes the modern medalist is limited only by his or her imagination. Technical proficiency and sense of design is not enough. The medalist must speak, and speak clearly of ideas, hopes and dreams, and do it through the medium of a small chunk of metal held in the hand of the audience.

The inanimate medal speaks aloud the ideas of the medalist, and being inanimate, the medal is immortal. It will outlive its creator, and carry his or her thoughts into a limitless future. This is the art of the medal.



Karen Worth: *Pygmalion and Galatea*, Brookgreen Gardens, 1982, 75 mm.



Marcel Jovine: *The Sculptor at Work*, Brookgreen Gardens, 1985, 75 mm.



YOU CAN COMMISSION A MEDAL

By Beverly Mazze

Contemporary medals usually take one of two forms: the commemorative, which is a medal designed to commemorate or recognize an event, person or organization; and the art medal, which is conceived and executed as a work of art and which may or may not be commemorative.

Medals are a very unique type of bas-relief sculpture, and the finished work is usually small and affordable. Such unique pieces of sculpture often become treasured heirlooms.

Commemorative medals are commissioned by individuals from all walks of life to mark a milestone in the life of a family member, friend, colleague or organization.

Both commemorative and art medals are collectibles that can be displayed formally or informally on small stands, pedestals, with other relief sculptures in display cabinets, as desk-top paper-weights and as small objets d'art.

Recently many technical papers have been printed in journals, lectures on the subject have been given, and workshops held for the artist on the process of creating medallic sculpture. The techniques of using different materials and tools in the mold-making and casting processes have been examined in detail.

There has been little written, however, on a very basic aspect of the medal: beginning the process by which a corporation, non-profit organization, committee, or individual can commission a medal to mark an outstanding achievement. The following suggestions and ideas are meant to simplify and clarify the process of commissioning a medal.

HOW TO BEGIN

A first step is to contact a sculptor or a producer. To help you do so, the American Medallic Sculpture Association (AMSA) has published a **DIRECTORY OF MEDALLIC ART**. Descriptions and illustrations of the work of artists, foundries, and Mints are to be found in the illustrated catalogue and display advertising sections of this reference.

As you browse through the **DIRECTORY**, select an artist or artists whose work appeals to you. Ask yourself whether the style of the artist's work is consistent with the public image of the organization commissioning the medal. If you are commissioning the medal for a family member or friend, consider what style of art he or she is most likely to appreciate. If you would rather have a producer handle the process from start to finish, select a Mint or Foundry as your contact instead of a sculptor.

If you have made your choices on behalf of a corporation or other organization, you will

discover that obtaining consensus within that organization is the hardest part of the process. The solution normally recommended for this kind of problem is that of forming a committee.

Richard Dusterberg, a Life Member of the American Numismatic Association (ANA), suggests choosing committee members from the most influential constituencies inside and outside the organization in order to navigate the inevitable political "shoals."

To increase the credibility of the entire process of artistic selection, someone from a major art school or museum could be added to the committee as well. If the medal is to be sold, someone with experience in marketing should also be included. Finally, it might be extremely helpful to have on the committee a lawyer who could help determine such questions as whether consent is required to use a recognized symbol such as a trademark, servicemark, public seal or insignia in the design of the medal.

From the earliest stages of contacting individuals to serve on the committee, make sure that they understand they are serving on an advisory committee. The real meaning is that after all the research has been completed, everyone will be welcome to state their views. However, all final decisions will be made by you in your capacity as chairperson working with the artist or producer chosen for the project.

'CAST MEDAL OR STRUCK MEDAL?

Now look again at the Illustrated Directory. Turn to the services and suppliers listing. Look at the artistic category and the artist(s) you have chosen will either be listed as "Medalist, Cast Medals" or "Medalist, Struck Medals." If you have made the decision to deal directly with a "Fine Art Foundry" or a "Mint, Private," these will be listed for you in the Commercial Category of the Directory.

If you want only a few medals, the least expensive method of production is to have them cast. Your choice would be "Medalist, Cast Medals" and producer "Fine Art Foundry." If you need a quantity of medals, then you should have them struck, and your choice would be "Medalist, Struck Medals" and producer "Mint, Private."

Do not hesitate to get competitive opinions and quotes in order to determine whether casting or striking will be more advantageous. If you award the medal commission to a producer, such as a foundry or a mint, the staff of that facility will discuss with you all necessary design considerations, including sculpting and production of the medal.

If you award the commission to a medalist, rather than a producer, the medalist will sculpt the medal and manage the production relationship with the foundry or Mint.

The pricing of struck medals includes the costs of artists sketches and sculpting of oversize plaster model(s). After the models are approved, the artist turns them over to a private Mint. In an automated process, the Mint reduces the models to the actual finished size and cuts the design(s) into the die.

The medal is produced by striking a blank piece of metal, frequently bronze, with the steel die. If the medal has one face, only one plaster model and one die are made, but if there are designs on both sides of the medal, two plaster models and two dies are required. Mint charges include both the cost of cutting the dies and striking the medals.

The pricing of cast medals usually includes preliminary sketches by the artist. After the sketches have been approved, the artist sculpts the medal to size directly in wax, clay, or plaster. Once the final model is approved, the foundry prepares a "mold" of the model.

In a process known as "lost-wax" casting, wax is poured into the mold as many times as the number of medals required. After each wax is pulled from the mold, it is cast. During this process, the wax is melted out ("lost") and replaced with molten metal. Cast medals require hand finishing (chasing, patination) and this is done either by the foundry or by the artist.

PRODUCING THE MEDAL

When contacting the artist(s) and/or producer(s) about the medal you want to commission, summarize the purpose of the medal and describe some of the key symbols associated with the subject. Identify the time frame of the project, the approximate size of your budget, and the number of cast or struck pieces you would like to have in the edition.

If the artist or producer is interested in the project, ask them how they would proceed. Ascertain whether they need to do further research, whether they will sketch a number of ideas, discuss them with you, and prepare a final working sketch. Determine whether they will prepare three-dimensional sketches: in clay or plaster.

Perhaps they will sculpt the final model immediately after discussing the various design ideas with you—without submitting preliminary sketches. Finally, be sure to nail down their basic estimate of how much each finished medal will cost in the quantity that you require, and specify how much of that cost will be in artist fees and how much in foundry or Mint fees.

The purpose of the preliminary sketches is to translate design ideas into visual form, trying out different placements and treatments of the design elements and determining which are the

most effective. Three-dimensional "sketches" in clay or plaster help bridge the gap between flat designs and the finished piece, providing an idea of how well the design holds together when viewed rising from a surface—instead of being a part of the surface.

The best way to ensure a good working relationship with an artist is to iron out all procedural details up front and in detail. Your pre-commission agreement should cover whether or not the artist is going to submit preliminary sketches, and give the artist a guarantee that after approval of the final model by the chairperson and the committee, no changes in the artist's design will be undertaken without his or her consent.

In addition, include the dates of deliverables and payments. Final payment is usually made in a number of stages: so much upon awarding the commission, so much upon reaching a certain stage in the process, so much upon completion. Who will retain rights to the copyright of the design should also be determined up front.

At a minimum, the artist should always retain the right to a small number of "Artist's Proofs" that can be shown in exhibitions, used for publicity purposes, or published with the understanding that your copyright is acknowledged on these occasions.

Time is an important consideration in the whole medal-commissioning process, and most certainly there must be clearly defined deadlines, or target dates, that are very important to you and your organization.

Committees often tend to underestimate the amount of time needed to produce a struck medal from start to finish, and as Richard Dursterberg's has expressed it, "a project involving committee formation, topic identification and research, medalist or producer selection, sculptor orientation, preparation of preliminary drawings and revisions, the creation of models, and the production and delivery of finished medals can easily consume 18 months."

Dusterberg adds, "This can be shortened if original art is not being used, if the medal is struck in low relief, and if the topic, producer or medalist is already known." Cast medals however, can be produced much more quickly and once design concepts have been established, and the medalist and producer chosen, the actual modeling and production for the medal can be done in four to six weeks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Richard Dursterberg provided insight from the client's point of view during the process of commissioning a medal, and AMSA-member medalists and producers shared their experiences from the sculptor's point of view. This kind of networking is one of the attractions of membership in AMSA, a non-profit

AN EXCITING NEW ARTISTS ASSOCIATION

organization for individuals that have a special interest and involvement with medals.

Sculptors, collectors, dealers, suppliers, mint and foundry representatives, museum curators, educators, writers, editors, and researchers belong to our association. In fact our membership list reads like a Who's Who in the field of medallic sculpture today.

So when we share experience, knowledge and skills, the combined backgrounds of our members ensure that all of us are kept informed of the latest developments in the field. AMSA meetings, held monthly during the non-summer months, provide wonderful opportunities for members to share information.

The AMSA journal, "Medallic Sculpture," and our quarterly newsletter "Members Exchange" offer additional opportunities for exchange of ideas. "Medallic Sculpture" is an annual and is the only glossy magazine devoted to the subject of medals published at the present time in the United States and Canada.

AMSA also regularly schedules high-power special events for members such as workshops, symposia and seminars. Exhibits of the work of AMSA medalists are booked in museums and galleries in the United States and abroad.

AMSA has recently learned of a new association for medalists in Canada, the Canadian Medallic and Bas-Relief Artists' Association, CAMBRA. The association was founded to promote the art of Canadian sculptors who work in bas-relief, work that includes commemorative and art medals, medallions, plaques, coins, monumental and architectural commissions.

The first mandate of CAMBRA is to publish the work of Canadian artists who produce bas-relief sculpture in its new journal, "Canadian Medallic Arts Magazine." Second mandate of the association is to promote and arrange exhibitions in Canada and in cooperation with other international medallic sculpture associations. Details are available from CAMBRA, Box 142, Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

AMSA BIO: DON DOW

Dear Editor, some time ago, "Medallic Sculpture" asked us to tell you about ourselves. So, here goes! I am a commercial sculptor, die engraver, and coining technician, a craftsman. I have absolutely no formal art training, yet I have supported myself for over 20 years as a producer of patterns, dies and molds for medals, tokens, plaques, grave markers, skate-boards, Las Vegas gaming tokens and other sculptured things you haven't even begun to imagine. My clients have included Franklin Mint, Medallic Art Co., Token and Medal Society (TAMS), the states of Arizona, Nevada, California, Idaho and Wyoming.

Some of the more interesting jobs I've handled were designing and making lollipop molds for a candy manufacturer; door handles for both the state capitol building and the county hospital, both in Phoenix, Arizona; molds for shoe buckles, automobile trim, tie tacks and lapel pins, decorative hinges and drawer pulls for a large zinc die-casting firm.

I see my stuff whenever I go into a hardware store or a coin shop. A real challenge was sculpturing and making flexible molds for the trim on a 20 foot birthday cake. The event was the centennial of Phoenix, Arizona. The pastry chef at one of the local resorts made a model 20 inches high and I had to sculpture all the trim, enlarging it by twelve times.

It was wonderful to see the completed project. It was horrifying to see it demolished in the course of a single evening! The cake's core was a pyramid of wooden shelves with a six-inch veneer of real cake.

Many of the sculptors I have met over the years have had too much pride and not enough business sense to accept this type of commission. I eagerly look for this off-beat work. There is nothing shameful in sculpturing a lollipop in 3 or 4 hours and getting \$200.00 for it, or spending a day on a tie tack for \$500.00.

Until the U.S. got involved in the Second World War, one of my duties was handling the teletype to keep in touch with our Asian facilities. There was no urgency involved. When I came to work in the morning, I'd distribute the messages that had come in overnight. In the afternoon, I'd send messages that would arrive during their night.

Then came Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941. At the same time the Japanese also invaded other countries, including Burma. The four of us that had "top secret" security clearance went on 24-hour duty. Some of the offices were converted to living quarters for us. Our food was delivered, and we even had our own private bar.

Eventually, we had to abandon the factories in Burma and China. The one in India was taken

over by the British and the Miami plant was sold to Vultee Aircraft. I was transferred to the purchasing department of Vultee. As the war progressed, Vultee merged with Consolidated Aircraft Corporation and is now known as General Dynamics Corporation.

Now the fun began. I was 18 and single. I got called in the draft. I have a congenital heart problem that I had learned to live with, but I was rejected and classified 4F (physical disaster case). The standards were lowered and I was called and rejected again. When it happened a third time I was summoned into the head office.

I, a lowly clerk-typist, was given a proposition I couldn't refuse. The company was tired of the uncertainty that surrounded me. They would get me a deferment that was fool-proof and promote me to buyer if I would attend night school and take courses that they picked for me. Naturally I agreed. The deferment came through, 2BF, an essential man in an essential industry and physically impaired on top of it. We joked that I would be called up only after all the women and children.

For the next three years, I attended school four nights a week. Courses at the technical high school, not necessarily in this order, were: Mechanical Drafting, Electrical Drafting, Metallurgy, Machine Shop Practice and Theory, Foundry Practice and Theory (sand mold), Pattern Making, Shell Mold and Investment Casting, Testing and Inspection Methods and Theory.

At college level the menu included Industrial Engineering, Accounting, and Business Management. I was also sent to seminars on advanced Forging Techniques and Metal Flow, and another on Vacuum Forming of Plastics.

That any of this would ever have anything to do with art or medals never entered my mind. I pursued a career in industrial purchasing in Miami, Florida; Chicago, Illinois; and Phoenix, Arizona. Then in August, 1965, I accompanied my wife to the ANA Convention in Houston, Texas. She was an avid collector and writer and was introducing a new book she had just written.

I met two members of the California State Numismatic Association (CSNA) there. CSNA needed a Portrait Medal of Leonel Panosh made for a planned testimonial banquet scheduled for March, 1966. Medallic Art Company (MACO) had told the club that all the good portrait medalists were booked well into 1966. One of those at the table explained the scarcity of good bas-relief portrait sculptors and 101 reasons why.

I learned that he was Gilroy Roberts, former chief engraver of the U.S. Mint and now chairman of the board of the newly organized General Numismatics Corp., parent of the Franklin Mint. At the time, none of this meant anything to me.

One of those at the table was aware of some of the outrageous dares and bets I had taken in the past. He turned to me and said, "Hell, Don, you can do it, can't you?" Naturally I said "yes." Money was bet around the table. The next morning I was informed that there was a \$300.00 pool on whether I could or couldn't. I was assured that CSNA would pay me well if I did it. The deadline was Feb. 1, 1966. CSNA would have photos to me within two weeks.

Heck, I had five months. It was a cinch. A few days later, back in Phoenix, Arizona, I checked out every book on sculpture at the local library. I sent a letter to Medallic Art Co. explaining the situation and asking for all the help they could give. Later I was told that the letter was read by EVERYONE and they all had a good laugh.

But, they all went overboard in supplying drawings, diagrams, photocopies of articles, and booklets from their sales department. I sent the plaster model a few days late, but it was timely. Thank God it was over. I didn't even bother to go to the banquet.

About a week after the banquet, I was contacted by TAMS, and asked to do their four past presidents. The schedule was loose so I agreed. About a month later, I was asked by CSNA to do 12 more for them over a three year period. Jobs came in from Medallic Art Co., Metal Arts Co. of Rochester, NY, the candy manufacturer, and a local art foundry. I had to give up my regular job in 1968. I was making more money evenings and weekends than I was on the 9 to 5 job. The logical thing to do was to devote more time to sculpture.

Medallic Art Co. invited me to their plant to see the process at work and better understand the discipline. I was there a week and spent one day in each department. That is how I got to know Ray Ruete and Hugo Greco.

After my divorce in 1971, I moved to California. Within 48 hours, I was given the highest-priced job I had ever had. I was to create one of the earliest mass-produced one Troy ounce silver bullion pieces, choose the Mint and expedite delivery on a regular weekly basis.

Payment for the models, obverse and reverse was \$2,000.00, plus \$500.00 per month to do the expediting. Demand and production grew, and soon I had to divide production between two small California private Mints.

In January, 1973, I was given a bank account of \$500,000.00 and a promise of more as I needed it and told to create a Mint in the town of Rialto, in Southern California. I had the place operating by June, turning out 20,000 coins a day, four days a week. Fridays were reserved for custom work.

There was no time for sculpture, and friction was developing among the owners. Rather than choosing sides, I resigned in October. Barbara

Hyde and I opened our own mint in Santa Ana, California in late 1974, to take advantage of the bicentennial craze.

We sold it in May 1976, when the demand for bicentennial medals was still high. I kept the automatic engraving machine. Instead of just furnishing the plaster models, I could offer a complete service from the sketch to the finished die ready to go into the press.

From 1982 to 1985, I ran the engraving department, trained press operators, and rearranged the operations of Rarities Mint in Anaheim, California. In early 1987, I was hired by Sunshine Mining Co. (world's largest producer of silver ever) to set up an art and engraving department at their Mint in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

When the contract was finished in 1988, I had no desire to go back to the rat race. It is beautiful here. The Spokane airport is only 40 minutes away. There is both Federal Express and UPS service right at my door. My machinery and tools are still at Sunshine and we have a good arrangement so that they and I both can use them.

Jack Christiansen, the fellow with the red beard and I are now looking for a property where we can live, have a studio, and a place for the engraving machinery.

I love to teach. I cannot make an artist, but I can teach a bag of tricks that removes all guess work from the mechanical and chemical problems so the artist can concentrate on art. Just simple solutions to simple problems learned over a 209 year period, in machine shops, foundries and forge shops in heavy industry. I have offered to teach evening classes at two colleges but have been turned down because I lack degrees and have no teaching credentials.

I will not enter any contests or enter any juried shows. The last time ever, was the 1969 annual affair at the Phoenix Art Museum. I had a local cabinet maker make me a nice walnut plaque upon which I mounted a pristine 18" plaster model of a medal and two struck copies of the piece in 1-3/8-inch and 3-inch diameters, struck by Medallic Art Company.

My entry was rejected with the comment: "The work shows a high degree of skill and a mastery of the technique, but it does not reflect contemporary taste." Over the next 8 weeks, more than 80,000 copies of the medals were sold and my royalties were a little over \$12,900.00. A bronze cast was made from that plaster model and is mounted at Powell Point at the Grand Canyon.

Of the 200 works displayed at the museum, I understand 3/4 of them were for sale. Fewer than a dozen of them sold. I presume they all reflected contemporary taste. Like the late pianist Liberace, I cried all the way to the bank.

I have a reputation of being a nonconformist and also an iconoclast. Both are true. I also have a reputation of being damned cooperative and damned easy to get along with, when all the cards and chips are laid out on the table.

I am willing to work with you as editor and AMSA. As you can see from this article, I just don't know when to shut it off! Several coin columnists and editors of large publications have told me to keep it up. They love it. I send thirty column inches, and they can only handle twenty column inches. Wonderful, they only have to edit, never add.

The things that I believe that I should write about are those things that are never taught in an art school, or are touched upon lightly or are taught incorrectly. Some of the subjects could be how to make tools from steel or aluminum nails, screwdrivers or old flatware. Another could be on how to make really sturdy easels of any size you need, or, how to make circular basins of any profile you need. There are many more.

Jack Christiansen is on his way over to get a few bugs out of my computer, so I'm going to use that as an opportunity to end this article. Good luck.

A METHOD TO MAKE COIN AND MEDAL BASINS

By Don Dow

The making of struck coins and medals requires some skills, tools and knowledge not usually encountered in a sculpture class. The manufacture of national currencies, gambling tokens, souvenir coins and high volume commemorative medals require definite procedures and techniques not necessary or available in previous centuries. The medallic sculptor of today must have, at least, a basic awareness of these procedures and techniques.

To produce a coin or medal to meet modern production methods and standards, you must start with a good foundation. That foundation is called a 'basin.' Whether it is concave, convex, or flat, it is still called a 'basin.' It is usually made of plaster. I will cover only tooling to make round basins as they are the most universally used.

Start with a perfectly flat piece of 3/4" X 16" X 16" (or larger) particle-board. Plywood will warp. Sand all surfaces smooth, flat and straight. Either you or a cabinet maker cover all surfaces with formica (or equivalent) countertop material. This stage must be done to perfection. It is important that the application of the formica covering material be in the sequence I

give you. I have had four previous designs that failed in use. This current design has served me well for over fifteen years.

All of the Formica joints must overlap, no fancy chamfers or angled edges. Later we will cut through one of these surfaces but we want it so perfect that it will never warp or bulge. For later reference, let's call this the 'stage,' because everything later is going to be done on this stage.

Cover the four edges first, trim and file the overhand in a professional manner. Next cover the top surface so that it overlaps the edges. Do not cover the bottom yet. Find dead center and drill or bore a hole in the top surface clear through the bottom to hold the bushing.

Insert the drill rod or shafting in the bushing while you cement the bushing into place. Use anything you have to insure that the rod is absolutely vertical to the stage. Once the rod and bushing are vertical, completely stable and immovable, you can remove the rod and cover the bottom.

Replace the rod and attach a router to it. Rout a 12-inch diameter circular slot about 3/8 to 1/2 inch deep. This slot is to hold the fence that will later retain your plaster. The width of the slot is determined by the thickness of your fence material.

The fence should be about 2 inches wide by about 40 inches long. You can use shorter strips and overlap them. The circumference of a 12-inch diameter circle is 37.69 inches and you will want at least a 3 inch overlap. My preferred material is .025-inch aluminum. I have it cut from scrap at a local sheet metal shop. You can use Formica, Lucite, or any waterproof material. But, the slot must be wide enough to handle the overlap.

Have a machinist mill, drill and tap your bar stock as shown on the drawings accompanying this article. Screw the works together. The basic tooling is now complete.

To shape the contours for your desired basin, you will have to make some templates. You will need a jeweler's saw and some metal or plastic about .050 to .075 inch thick X 1 inch side, about 5 to 8 inches long. I prefer magnesium scrap printing plates which I get from a local photo engraver.

I also use scrap lucite and plexiglass obtainable from any glass or window shop. The formica counter-top material also works. Whatever you use, the supplier will usually cut it to the rough sizes you need.

Draw your desired contour on paper. Rubber-cement it to the side of your template stock and saw away. To make the job easier, make a jeweler's bench pin from a piece of wood about 1/4 inch x 4 inches X 12 inches. Cut a 'V' at one end and fasten it to your table or bench with a 'C-clamp' and do your sawing within the 'V'.

Always design your template so that point farthest from the post rides on the stage.

Put the rod in place. Put enough clay on the stage to do the job. Do a little hand forming. Slip the template into the slot in the tool bar. Tighten the set screws. Slide the assembly down the post and start turning.

To make a plaster, remove the rod and plug the hole. Place the fence in the slot. Hold it in place with a bungee cord or a Kemper or Universal mold strap, available at ceramic supply shops. Seal the inside joint with clay where fence and stage meet so no moisture seeps into the particle board. Be neat; use a tool. On the first pour, you might brush a little oil on that new fence and stage so they part cleanly.

BILL OF MATERIALS REQUIRED

1 piece 3/4" X 16" X 16" (or larger) particle board

Sufficient Formica (or equivalent) countertop material to cover all six surfaces.

Sufficient mastic bonding material to bond the formica to the board. The smallest can or bottle available is enough. Also get a brush to apply it.

1 piece Material, 2" wide X 40" long, for fence. See text above about fences.

1 only Steel bushing about 1" O.D. X 5/16" I.D. X 7/8" long. Available at hardware, industrial supply, or the shop machining the tool bar.

1 piece Drill rod or shafting 5/16" dia. X 6" to 8" long. This piece must fit into the bushing snug, but also be loose enough to be withdrawn when necessary. Best source is an industrial supply store or again the machine shop.

1 piece Aluminum, brass or magnesium bar 3/4" to 1" thick X 1-1/2" wide X 8" long. Avoid steel, it will rust.

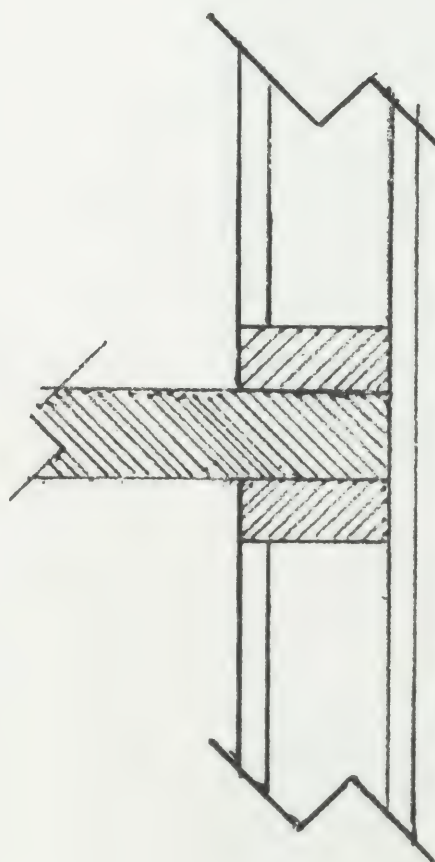
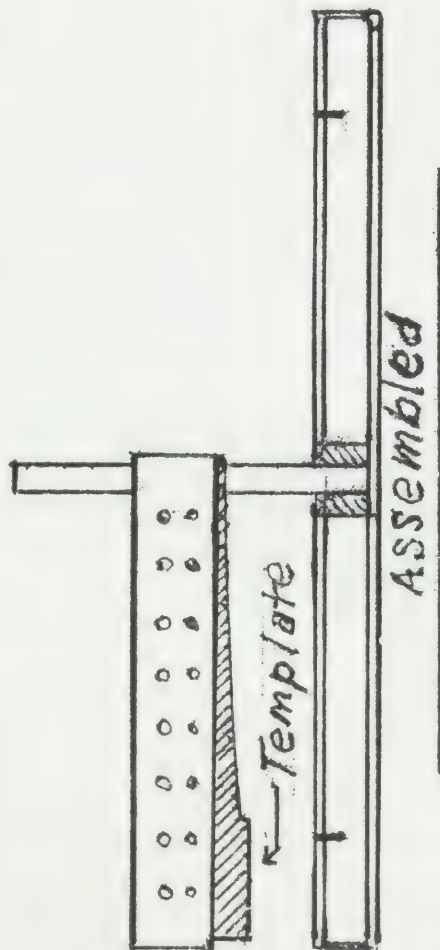
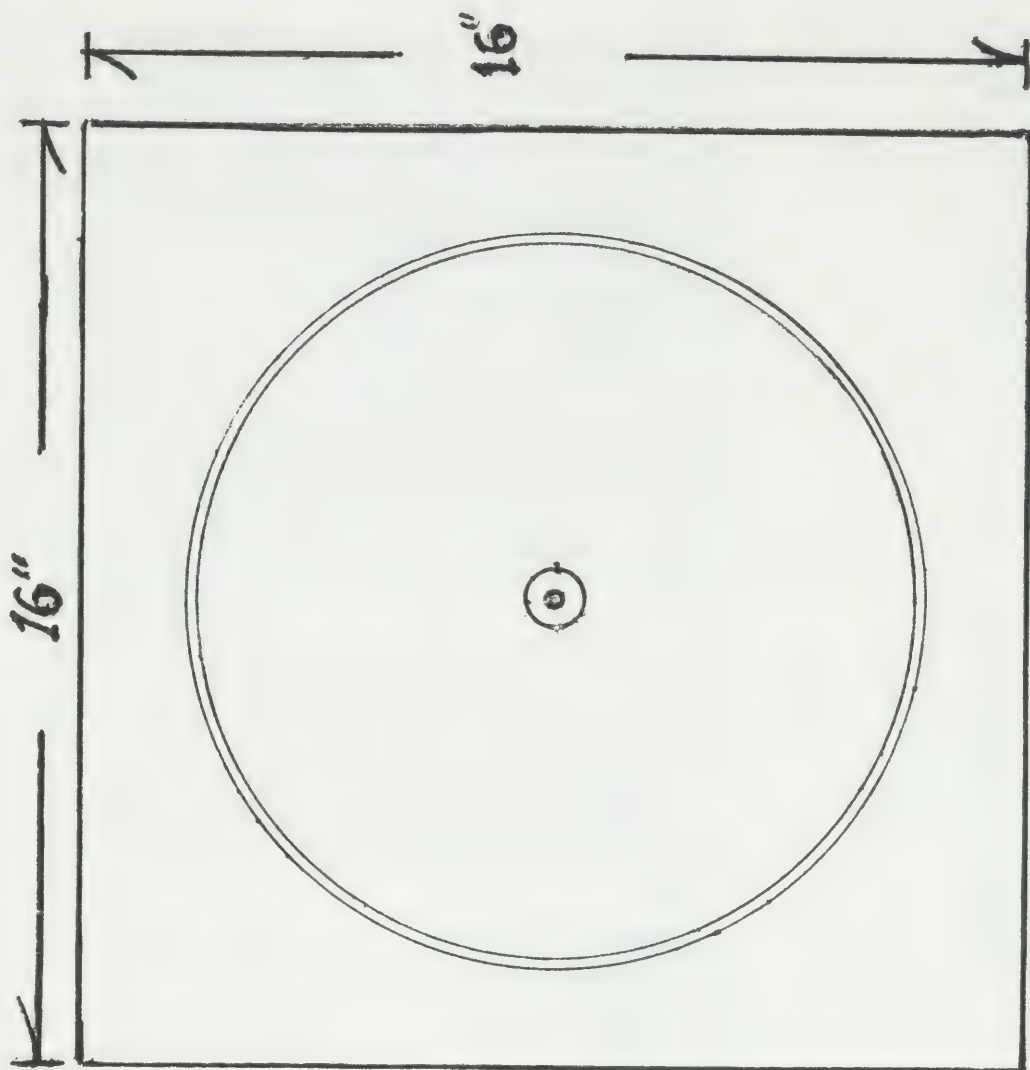
1 piece same material, 1/4" X 1-1/2" X 8" long.

8 pieces 1/4"-20 X 1/4", or #10-32, Allen head cup point set screws.

8 pieces 1/4"-20 X 3/4" Allen Head countersunk head screws.

1 only Allen wrench to work the screws.

NOTE: If you feel it is not worth the hassle and expense, I make basins to your specifications. The cost varies from \$50 to \$80 per plaster basin depending on complexity. Send a line drawing of the contour you want and I will give you a quote. My address and telephone number are in the AMSA DIRECTORY, published earlier this year.



BUSHING DETAIL

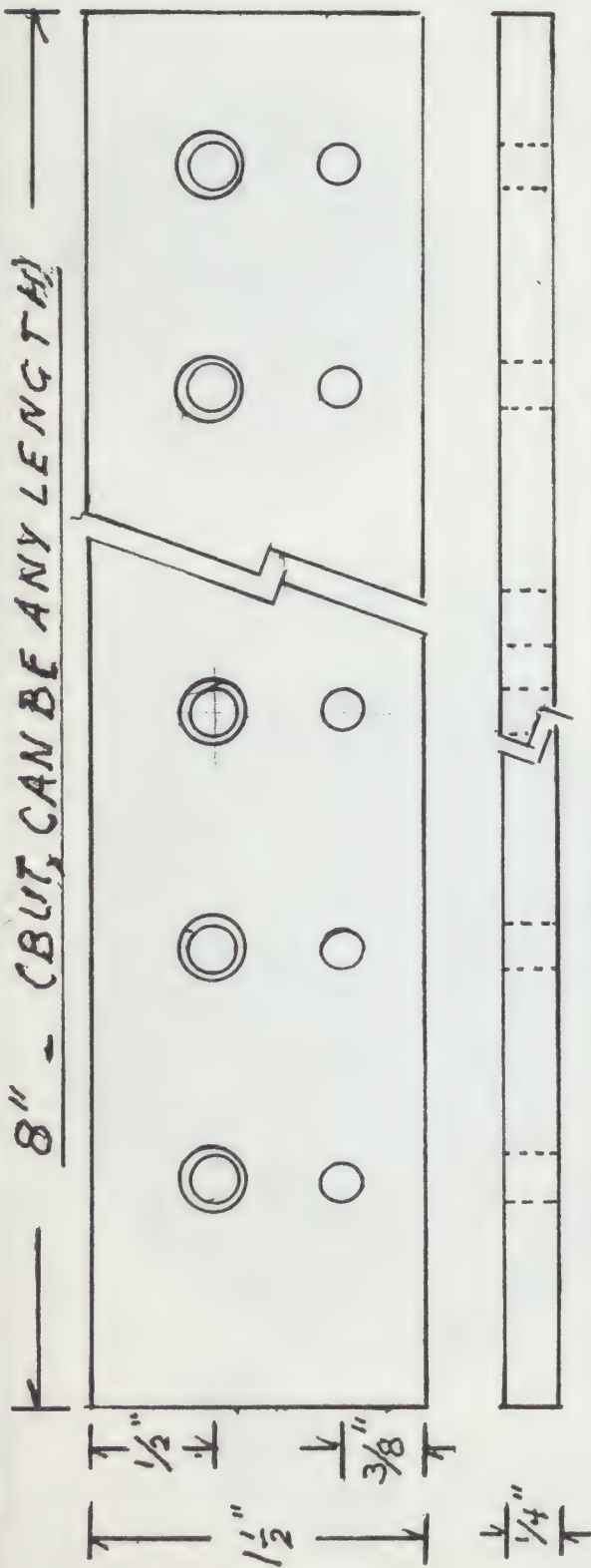
ROD SHOULD FIT SNUG BUT BE REMOVABLE. MAKE SURE THE BUSHING IS VERTICAL AND SECURELY CEMENTED BEFORE APPLYING BOTTOM FORMICA. IT IS O.K. IF BUSHING IS HIGHER THAN TOP SURFACE, NOT LOWER.

NOT TO SCALE DESIGNED: DDOW Oct. 20, '90

MATERIAL: 3/4" PARTICLE BOARD - 1/8" FORMICA
STEEL BUSHING & ROD (SEE TEXT)

BASIN TOOL - STAGE BT-S-1

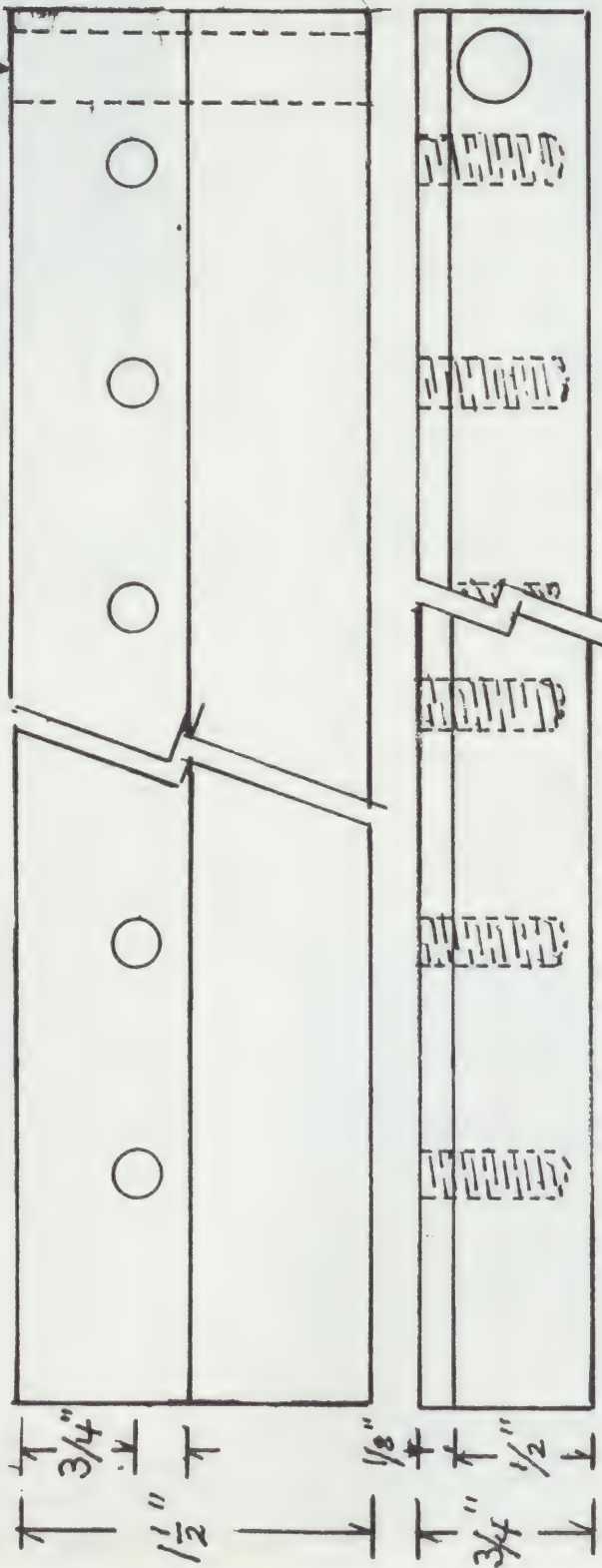
8" - CBUT, CAN BE ANY LENGTH



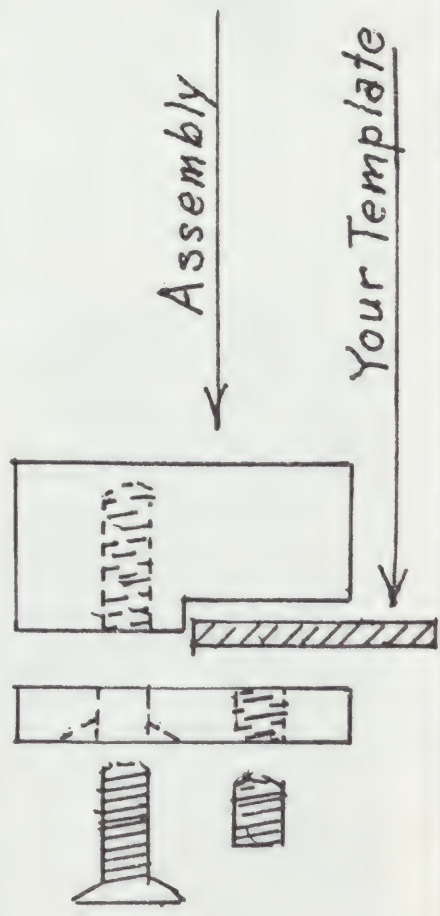
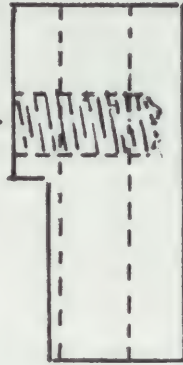
- On 1" Centers.
- Drill & Countersink For 1/4" - 20 Screws
- Drill & Tap for #10-32 or 1/4" - 20 Headless set screws



Drill to fit rod



Drill & Tap 1/4" - 20



Oct. 20, '90

NOT TO SCALE DESIGNED: D. DOW

MATERIAL: BAR STOCK - ALUMINUM
8 SET SCREWS - 8 MACHINE SCREWS

BASIN TOOL - BAR

BT-B-1

FIDEM '90 . . . biennial of the Medal

By Alan M. Stahl

The 22nd Congress and exhibition of the Federation Internationale de la Medaille (FIDEM) was held June 13-16, 1990 in Helsinki, Finland. Over 1200 contemporary medals from 28 member countries were displayed in the modern Helsinki City Art Museum, and hundreds of artists, collectors, producers and scholars participated in discussions on the history of art of the medal at the historic University of Helsinki.

The FIDEM exhibitions, which have been held more or less every two years for the past half-century, are considered the major international shows of medallic art. Works on display range from traditional medals with portraits and legends to abstract pieces which are essentially small sculptures with only the scale or the shape of a traditional medal to justify their inclusion. Often a national character is evident in the work from one country, despite the inclusion of artists of many age groups and kinds of training. There is space to discuss only a few of the medals.

In the exhibition of the host country, Finland, the connection of the medal to contemporary Finnish monumental sculpture was evident. The cast medals were heavy and the relief was bold. It is part of Finnish social life for a medal to be commissioned for an important event in the life of an individual. The demands for such monuments, which provides an ongoing livelihood for a substantial number of medallists in this small country, accounted for the personal nature of many of the medals on display.

In France, on the other hand, the impetus of much of the medallic productions comes from the government mint, which issues many series of medals sold by catalogue to collectors throughout the world. Though the series are usually arranged and sold by subject, the mint has a tradition of seeking work from skilled artists in all media and has been in the forefront of experimentation with patinas and alternate materials. The Hungarian exhibition, as in past years, was marked by a distinct division between two approaches to the medal. Some medallists were represented by cast bronze medals in the traditional format of portrait obverse and emblematic reverse. Other artists used the basic scale of the medal for abstract constructions which incorporated carved stone, porcelain and lucite.

The Portuguese medals displayed were mainly commissions of corporations and institutions, usually in celebration of an anniversary. Many had strong ties to the graphic arts and were



Linda M. Adamiak 1963

Waverley

88 X 50 mm bronze crystal cast



Ronald J. Avillon 1967

Monogram: A is for Apple

42 mm bronze cast



Edith Rae Brown 1942

One Man's Tranquillity

110 mm bronze cast

struck with a delicacy and finesse seen on few pieces from other nations.

Unifying characteristics were apparent among the American medals, but were difficult to define. Mico Kaufman's whimsical but strongly personal self-portrait was displayed next to his official George Bush inauguration medal. Leonda Finke's portrait of Virginia Woolf brought deep psychological insight into historical personalities.

Jeanne Stevens-Sollman and Daniel Telleen turned the idea of the medal as portrait to subjects more usually treated in still-life painting, respectively sheep and an apple. Jeffrey Maron and Jim Knecht used the physical attributes of the medal for compositions which are abstract, yet strongly symbolic.

Through the diversity of specific approaches to the medal in the U.S. exhibition, a common theme of the adaptation of individual aspects of the traditional medal to personal expression could be clearly discerned. Formal aspects dominant among the American medals were the popularity of lost-wax casting with carefully varied patination, the scarcity of legends or distinctive epigraphy used for them, and the experimentation with chains and ribbons to hold parts of the medal together or allow it to be worn.

At the close of the four-day Congress, the American delegation hosted a reception for the heads of the other delegations, presenting each with the FIDEM 1990 medal by Eugene Daub.

The next FIDEM Exhibition and Congress has been scheduled for September 1992 at the British Museum. Those wishing further information on FIDEM itself or on submitting work for the London exhibition or participation in the congress, which will explore the relation of drawing to medallic sculpture, should contact the US delegate to FIDEM: Dr. Alan M. Stahl, Curator of Medals, The American Numismatic Society, Broadway and 155th St., New York, NY 10032.



Chloe Ann Calder-Dellaport 1930

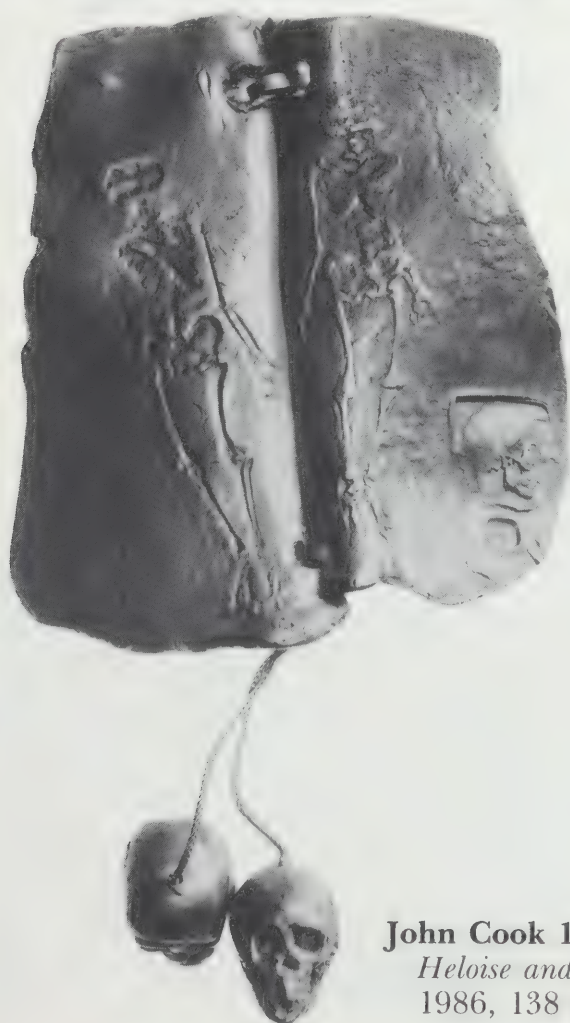
Bird in Hand

65 mm bronze cast

Eugene Daub

Homage to Crazy Horse I

1990, 110 x 105 mm bronze cast



John Cook 1930

Heloise and Abelard

1986, 138 mm bronze cast

EDITOR'S NOTE . . .

AMSA is proud to present in the pages of *Medallic Sculpture* a photograph of one medal submitted to the 22nd FIDEM Congress by each American artist taking part in this great international event.

It is our understanding that the budgetary limitations faced by the hosts of the 1990 Congress precluded the traditional practice of including a photo of each artist's work as has been the practice at other FIDEM events.

In one sense, however, this gives AMSA an unexpected and thoroughly pleasant opportunity

to serve American medallic artists. We can publicize these many and varied medals here for the first time to our members and readers. Special thanks to the ANS and their photographer Frank Deak for these photographs.

We feel a visual treat is yours as you scan this remarkable photo gallery of American skill and craft. Enjoy!

DTA.

Leonda F. Finke

Virginia Woolf - A Room of One's Own
1989 80 x 93 mm bronze cast



Sergio De Giusti 1941

Victory Stele
1989, 130 mm bronze cast

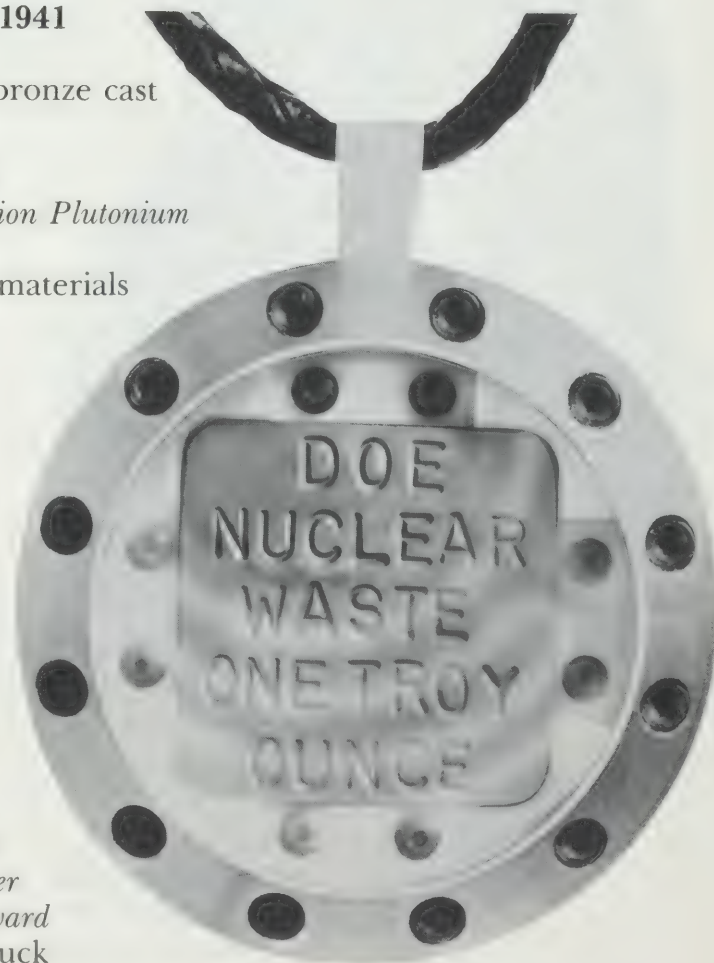
William L. Gould 1946

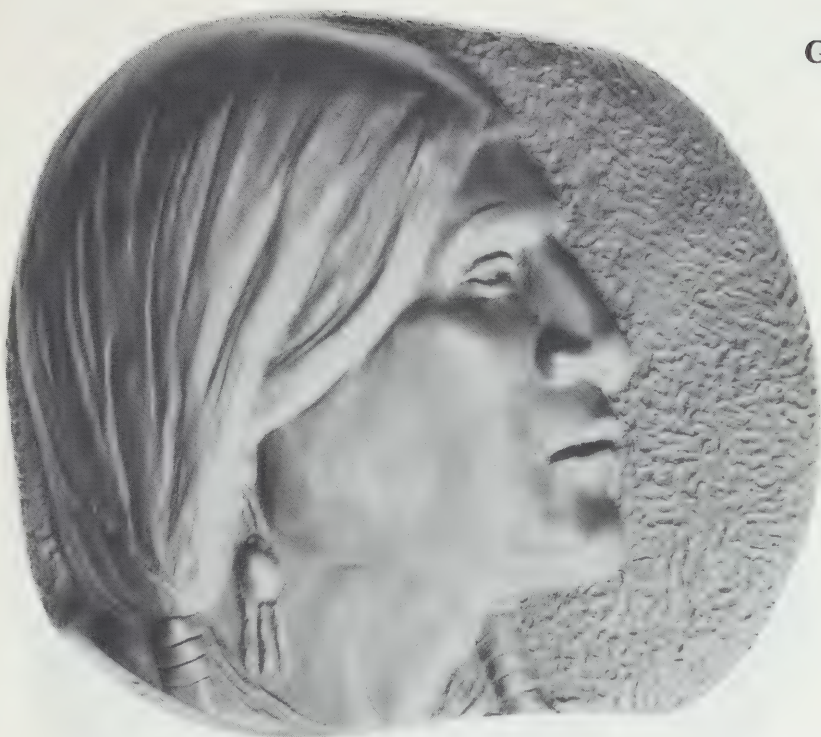
WIPPED - Waste Isolation Plutonium Encasement Device
1988, 76 mm various materials



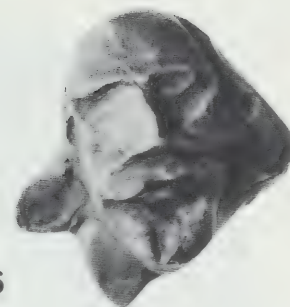
Lloyd Glasson 1931

The Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Award
76 mm bronze struck





Geri Jimenez-Gould 1943
Jicarilla Apache
 120 mm bronze cast



Peter David Johnson 1956
Shakespeare
 35 mm bronze cast



Elisabeth A. Jones 1935
*Centenary of the International
 Council of Women*
 1988, 49 mm silver struck



Mico Kaufman 1924
Self Portrait
 115 mm bronze cast

Marcel Jovine
The Carousel, Calender Medal
 1988, 77 mm bronze struck

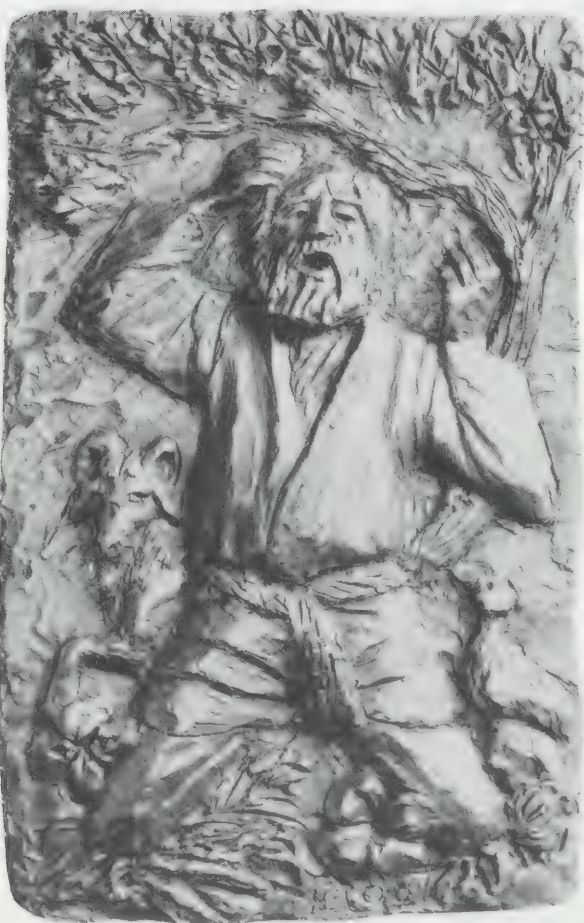


Stephen M. Howard 1959
Things on Rocks A & B
 2 pieces cast bronze
 100 x 45 mm, 75 x 55 mm



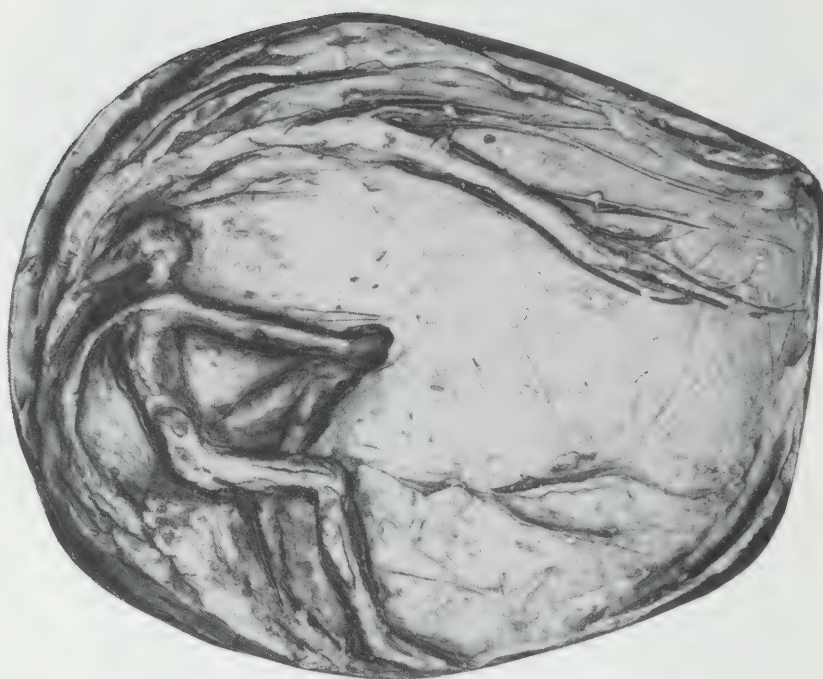


Jim Knecht 1934
Night Vigil
 117 mm bronze cast

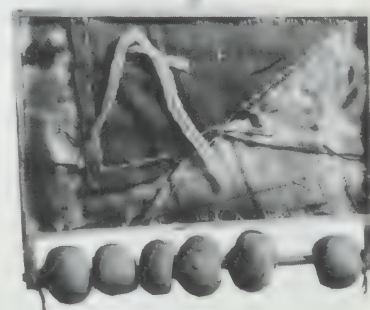


Herbert Leopold 1930
The Shochet (from a story by
 Isaac Beshevis Singer, produced
 in conjunction with the author)
 126 x 83 mm bronze cast

Barbara Lekberg 1925
*The Active and the
 Contemplative Life*
 1990, 87 mm bronze cast



Roland Wayne Landis 1954
Numismatic Arts
 1989, 46 mm silver struck



James Malonebeach 1947
North Woods Grandmother
 1988, 150 x 64 mm mixed material



Jeffrey Maron 1949
Medicine Wheel
 84 mm bronze (unique)



Irving Mazze 1928
The Link
 1990, 75 mm bronze crystal



Jim Peed
1989 World Alpine Ski Championship
 1989, 38 mm bronze cast

Mashiko 1941
Z-2
 1989, 90 x 145 mm carved stone



Karen Martin 1954
Waves II
 1990, 140 mm bronze cast



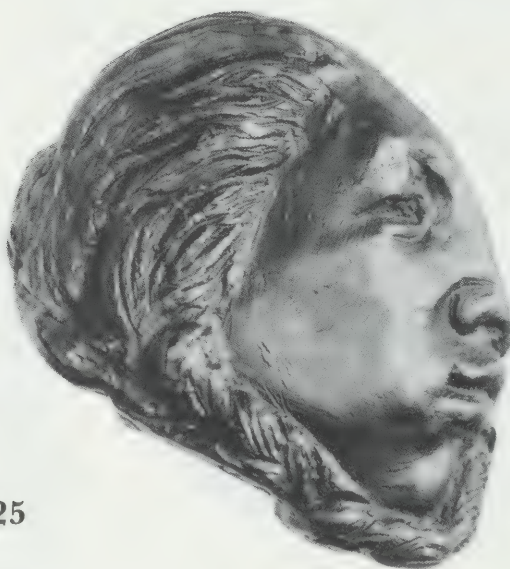


Alex Shagin 1947
East-West
 1989, 70 mm bronze cast



Bernard L. Schmidt 1936
The Morning Song
 85 x 95 mm bronze cast

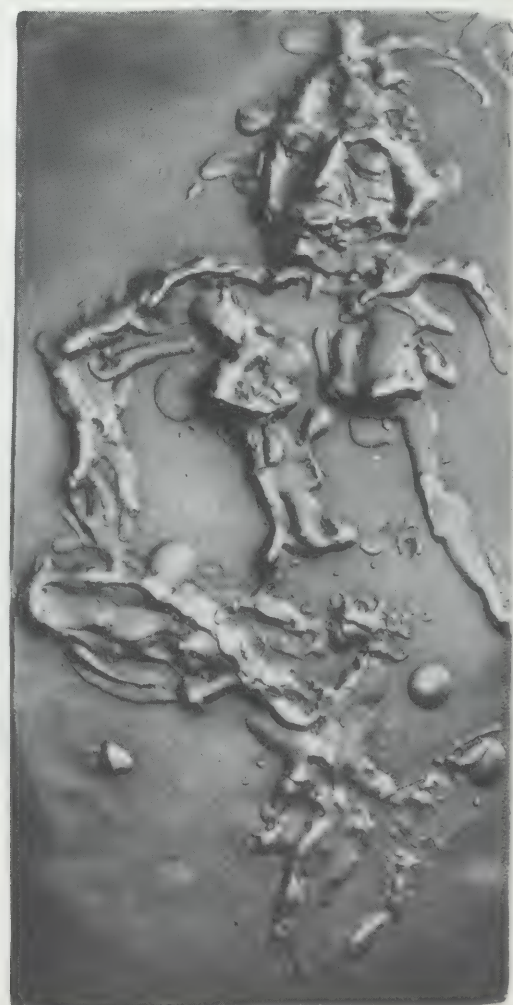
Patricia Verani 1927
Era
 60 mm bronze cast

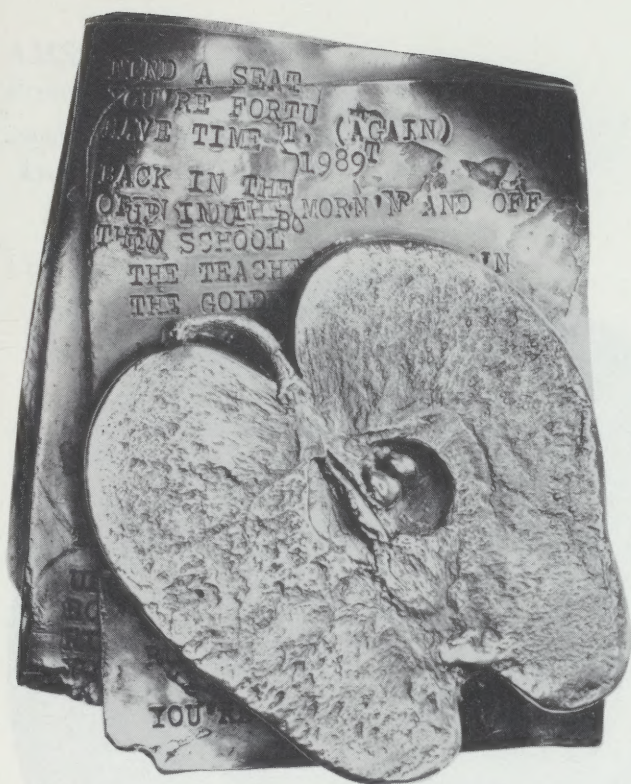


Jean Frances Schonwalter 1925
The Poet
 84 mm bronze cast



Holli Alexander Schwartz
Connie's Piece
 140 x 70 mm bronze cast





Daniel Edward Telleen 1944
Sept. (Again) 1989
 1989, 90 x 105 mm bronze cast

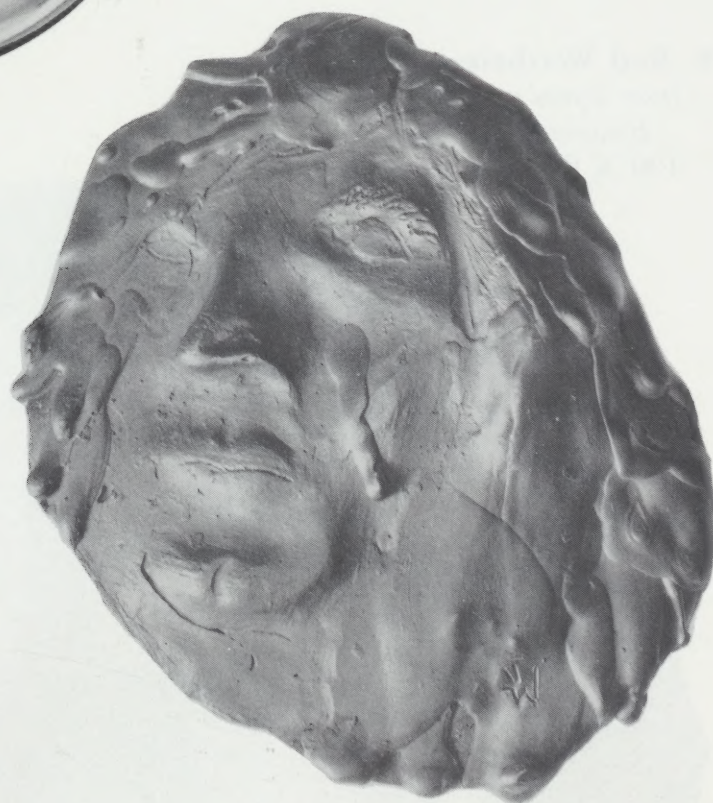


Frank Winship Redding 1955
Michaelangelo's Eve
 79 mm bronze cast

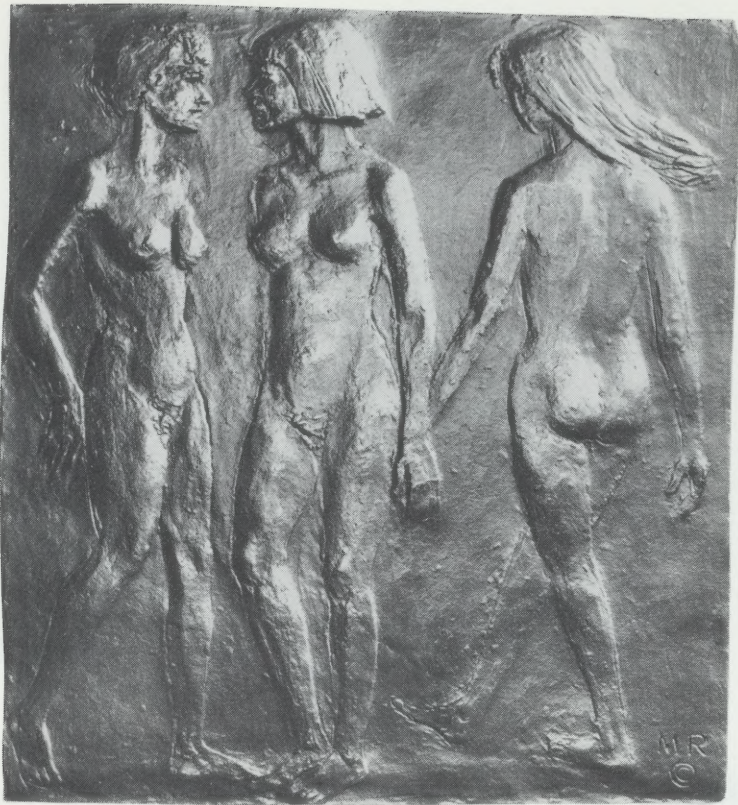


Karen Worth 1924
Walt Disney
 64 mm silver struck

Marika Somogyi 1939
Lady Chatterley
 100 mm bronze cast



Jennifer Waslohn 1968
The First Tear
 1988, 80 x 90 mm bronze cast



Marion Roller
Three Generations
 1988, 130 x 140 bronze cast



Merlin Szosz 1936
Albany Medical College
 90 mm bronze struck

E. Bud Wertheim
Inter Spem et Metem -
Between Hope and Fear
 100 X 60 mm bronze cast



Jeanne Lee Stevens-Sollman
Wool Breeds
 1987 100 x 100 mm bronze cast

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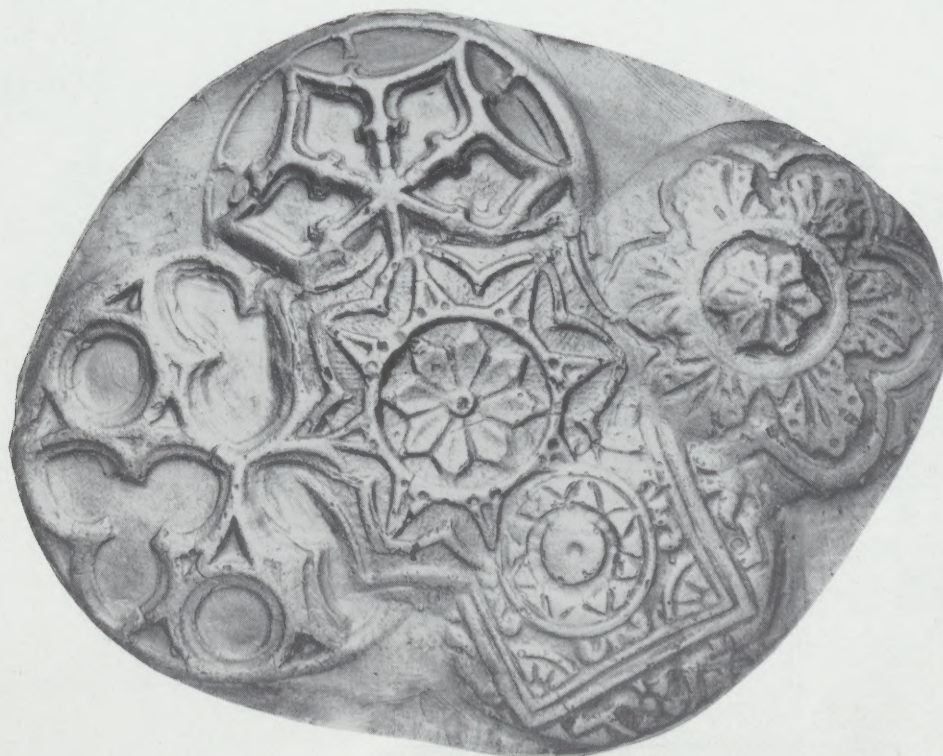
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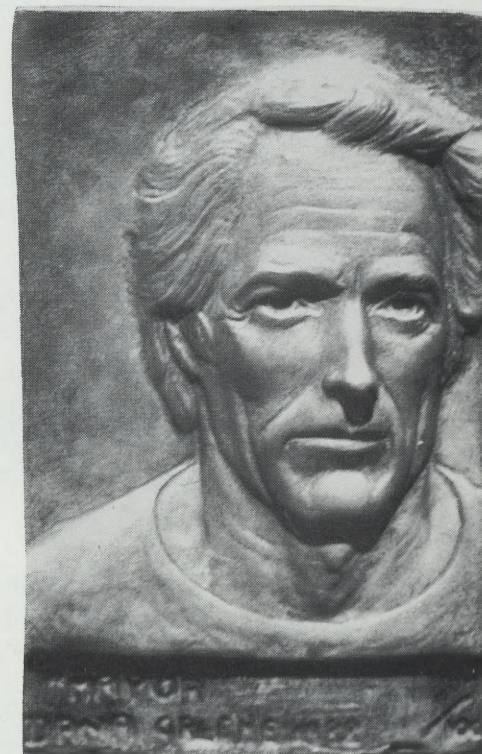
FROM OUR MEMBERS ...



George S. Cuhaj
Cathedral Doorknobs
1989 bronze, 102 x 82 mm



Hector Garcia 1933
Flame of Freedom
 90 mm bronze cast



Dana Joan Greene
Mayor
 50 x 80 mm silver cast



Sylvia M. Perle 1938
Amnesty
 120 mm bronze cast